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SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY REVIEW



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THRUST - SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY REVIEW. Issue #24, Spring / Summer 1986. ISSN: 0198-6686. Published twice per year, April and October, by Thrust Publications, 8217 Langport Terrace, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877, U.S.A. Telephone: (301)948-2514.

Subscriptions: 4-issue (2-year) subscriptions: \$8.00 in the U.S.A. and \$10.00 elsewhere. 8-issue (4-year) subscriptions are \$14.00 in the U.S.A. and \$16.00 elsewhere. Make all checks to Thrust Publications, in U.S. dollars only. All subscriptions begin with the next issue. Institutional subscriptions (only) may be billed. Single copies are \$2.50 in the U.S.A. and \$2.75 elsewhere.

Back issues: Issues #8,9,10,11,12,13, 14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23 and 24 may be ordered directly from Thrust Publications for \$2.50 each, 4/\$8.00, or 8/\$14.00 in the U.S., and \$2.75 each, 4/\$10.00, or 8/\$16.00 elsewhere.

Advertising: Display advertising rates available on request. Classified ads are 20¢ per word, 20 word minimum; payment must be included with copy. Display classified advertisements are \$10.00 per column inch per issue (3 1/4" wide). Deadlines are March 1st for the Spring/Summer issue, and September 1st for the Fall/Winter issue.

Wholesale Distribution: Current issues of THRUST are available at wholesale discounts of 40-50% off, and back issues for 40-60% off, directly from Thrust Publications. Write for full details. THRUST is also available from the following distributors:

F&S Book Company, Inc., P.O. Box 415, Staten Island, New York 11204.

Diamond Comic Distributors, Inc., 1720 Belmont Avenue, Suite C, Baltimore, Maryland 21207.

Capital City Distribution, Inc., 2827 Perry Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53713.

Submissions: Writer and artist guidelines are sent on request. Unsolicited manuscripts and art are welcomed with return postage. The publisher accepts no responsibility for unsolicited materials. All letters of comment sent to the magazine will be considered publishable unless otherwise stated.

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IMPULSE



editorial by Doug Fratz

Welcome to THRUST - SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY REVIEW #24, the latest issue of the thinking fan's semi-prozine. With this issue, THRUST enters its fourteenth year of publication. There may be major changes due for THRUST before its fifteenth anniversary issue, but more on that later.

The Issue At Hand: This issue shares with other recent issues a paucity of columns by THRUST's distinguished list of contributing editors, with only Darrell Schweitzer and I appearing. (I have a number of rather firm promises for columns for next issue, including some by columnists not seen here for several years. Say tuned!) Darrell is once again looking at SF and fantasy movies, including the long awaited *Enemy Mine*. Darrell's most recent book is from W. Paul Ganley, a collection of eighteen short stories entitled *Tom O'Bedlam's Night Out and Other Strange Excursions*, in trade paperback with beautiful Fabian illustrations. In my column, I decided to utilize a "scientific" approach in looking at the results of the John W. Campbell Awards for the best new writer and assessing how accurate they have been in picking out new talent in the field. I think the data can be interpreted to lead to some interesting and unexpected conclusions.

Our lead interview this issue is with one of the brightest new stars in the SF field of the past few years, David Brin. Brin is clearly a major contributor to the 1980s hard-science-fiction renaissance, but I believe this is the first interview with him that I have seen. Our second interview is with lesser-known author Sterling E. Lanier. I knew almost nothing about Lanier when Darrell submitted this interview, but as

soon as I read it, I knew I had to have it for THRUST. If you too have never read any of Lanier's work, don't let that keep you from reading this interview with one of the truly unique personalities in a field full of people marching to a different beat.

Marvin Kaye is back with the second of his six-part series of articles on the concepts of immortality, begun last issue, and Janrae Frank contributes some thoughts on L. Ron Hubbard and his "Mission Earth" dekalogy (all ten volumes of which were apparently completed by Hubbard before his recent death).

Our book reviews section is up to our usual high critical standards, and has a new format with cover reproductions. I am also pleased to report that my plea for more letters in last issue has been answered with an outpouring of comments, many of which can be seen in our expanded letters section this issue.

One of the changes this issue you may already have noticed is the new three-column page format. I changed from the old two-column format to increase THRUST's readability without resorting to larger type and lower type density (which would result in less words per page). I think it improves the look of the magazine, and is more versatile from a design point of view.

Wanted: Dedicated Staff; Hard Work, Low Pay. I have been doing much thinking about THRUST's future, and there never seems to be any workable solutions to my overall dilemma, which can best be summarized as: 1) I can only spend ten to twenty hours a week on THRUST, thus limiting both the frequency to two issue per year, and the amount of effort I can spend promoting the magazine; 2) I can't hire anyone else to do any of this work

because THRUST is not sufficiently successful on a financial basis; and, 3) I spend so much time on financial and publishing matters that I don't have sufficient time to edit the magazine the way I want--seek out new talent, give ideas to writers and columnists, and otherwise take a more active creative role in the magazine's contents. The result of this dilemma appears to be a vicious circle where I run as fast as I can just to keep even.

A recent letter from Mark McGarry (former editor of *EMPIRE*) helped to spark a break-through in my thinking. Because I publish THRUST only twice a year, each issue is like a new book, requiring separate publicity. Despite the fact that I believe the last twelve issues of THRUST have been as good as any twelve issues of any review magazine ever published in the field, the magazine has not impinged to the degree I believe is warranted on the collective mind of the SF field. I am not getting the benefits more frequent periodicals enjoy--the word of mouth publicity which comes from frequently repeated success. If THRUST were, say, quarterly, I would be about to spend a much smaller percentage of my time on publishing, and more time on editing.

But alas, I don't have time to go quarterly working all by myself.

The idea of working alone on THRUST has been a given in my mind for many years now. But when I look around the field, all of my competitors are working full-time and publishing much more frequently, and I have been following the leads of lone-wolves like Andy Porter and Dick Geis, instead of that crowning example in our field of how to get lots done without working too hard, Charlie Brown and LOCUS.

So THRUST will be recruiting staff. My goal is to add three or four assistant editors, an advertising director, and possibly an art director within the next year, and then move to a quarterly schedule. Payment will be small or nonexistent for the editorial staff, and the advertising director will get 10% commission on all advertising revenues brought in--so think of this as a chance to learn, a chance to have creative input on one of the field's major publications, and be recognized as a professional in the field. Anyone interested? The duties can be very versatile, the commitment need be only ten to twenty hours a month. If you are interested in one of these staff positions (or one of your own design), send for more information. It could be the start of a brilliant career.

Semantic Slips: These editorials are always done in the eleventh hour, often in the middle of the night, and therefore may have more errors of various types in them than the rest of THRUST. McGarry's above mentioned letter also pointed out a real embarrassing one in last issue's editorial.

Occasionally, I find that I will

continued on page 30.

A Synthetic Art: DAVID BRIN INTERVIEWED

Photograph: Jerry Bauer



Conducted by Pascal J. Thomas

There is little need to introduce David Brin after his sweep of the 1984 awards with his novel *Startide Rising*. His works also include the earlier *Sundiver* and the upcoming *The Uplift War*, both in the same series as *Startide Rising* (and all from Bantam Books), stories in *ANALOG*, and a series of novellas in *ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE* now available as a hard-cover novel, *The Postman*. He also worked with co-author Gregory Benford on a recently released novel entitled *The Heart of the Comet*.

Also in *ANALOG*, Brin has written a number of non-fiction articles pertaining to his scientific field, astronomy. When we met in January of 1985 to conduct this interview, he was in Los Angeles to meet with his collaborator on a book in progress about the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) program, to be published by Cambridge University Press. We talked amidst the

comfortable and somewhat surreal surroundings of the backroom of the Change of Hobbit bookstore in Santa Monica, seated under a Flash-Gordon-style canopy, with echoes of hard rock cassettes wafting from the storeroom.

Thrust: We can start with a brief account of your younger days—where you were born, where you went to school, et cetera.

Brin: I grew up in Los Angeles. My father was a newspaper man and my mother taught school. I occasionally dabbled in writing, a story here and there. I always assumed that sooner or later I would write, as a hobby, and be published.

Thrust: It was going to be only a hobby?

Brin: It still seems like that, which may be a bit foolish since I am more successful at it than anything else I've

done. But I prefer to keep myself from thinking of writing as the life-and-death struggle, the thing at which I must absolutely be successful. I am a good teacher, for instance, though I don't do much teaching right now. Although my main income is from writing, I like to fool myself into thinking that my main vocation is being a scientist. I'm a quarter-time post-doctoral fellow at the California Space Institute at UCSD. We do studies for NASA, and I do some astronomy.

Thrust: Did you go directly from high school to college?

Brin: I attended Cal Tech in Pasadena, which was very difficult; about half of the incoming undergraduates were valedictorians in high school and had to face being in the lower half of the class. I was in the lower third, but graduated in the most difficult major in the school, astronomy. It was at Cal Tech that I began writing as a hobby. As a freshman, I found I couldn't "ration" science fiction. I had to stop reading SF entirely to make time for studying. I soon found myself writing a terrible detective novel that I will never resurrect. In my sophomore year the same thing happened, and I started a novel called *The Practice Effect*, which I put away after one hundred pages. Many years later in 1981, after finishing *Startide Rising*, and getting my Ph.D., I was looking for a light, easy project. So I pulled out *The Practice Effect* and used the earlier version as notes, totally rewriting it.

Thrust: So writing and going to college went well together?

Brin: Only up to a point. After finishing Cal Tech, I did not write for a while. With my degree in astronomy, I went to work as an electrical engineer for Hughes Aircraft in Newport Beach, and moved to San Diego when they transferred me down there. While I was working for Hughes, I wrote *Sundiver*, and that was before I had a word processor, so it was cut-and-paste. I submitted it to Bantam Books in 1978, and in 1979 Sidney Weinberg called me up and bought it! So I really received no rejection slips until after my first novel was published.

Thrust: How did you come to write short stories as well?

Brin: They are a completely different art form, and I enjoy them as well. There are actually three very different forms of fiction: short stories, novellas and novels.

Thrust: Then you wouldn't convert shorter fiction into a novel?

Brin: I do have a series of three novellas, the "Postman" series, appearing as a novel, and it works well. But I believe the novella is the highest form of literature, because you can go into

depth of character and detail, without getting carried away—you have to make every word count. Most of my novellas deal with myth in one form or another. My short stories divide between those which deal solely with technological problems, and those which try to work epiphanies. My novels are a bit more varied. But I like to do all three forms.

Thrust: In practice, how do you go about the business of writing?

Brin: Among SF writers, I am one of the strongest believers in circulating manuscripts and talking about them with others. For some writers, this is disaster—talking about a story destroys their will to write it. For me, the more I talk about a story, the more I want to write it. Part way into a work, I'll run off what I have and circulate it to some carefully selected friends, and get their feedback, find out where they were confused or slowed down. I very rarely take advice on what to do about a problem, just where the problems are. I don't want praise either. I just want to know where they felt less than totally involved, where they could remember they were reading a book rather than having incantations create images in their brains. The reader should not be able to close the book. It's the writer's job to make the reader forget to sleep, neglect food, and be late for work the next day.

Thrust: Which are the favorites of your works? Most of your work is hard SF, although *The Practice Effect* could be termed light fantasy.

Brin: It's difficult to choose between them. I worked very hard on *Startide Rising*, and am very proud of it. I had a feeling about what it would do for my career, and it had very good cover art. *The Practice Effect* had terrible cover art, but I didn't mind because it was not an important book, although it did sell as many copies as *Startide*.

Thrust: That's very surprising.

Brin: There's a voracious appetite out there for that kind of literature. There are two basic imperatives among people who read SF in general. One is "take me some place I've never been before," and the other is "make me feel the same way I did last time." The latter accounts for many of the tetralogies and quintalogies, which are read not to be shaken up, but to be given the same emotions, the same well-loved characters again. I prefer the former approach to SF, as does Greg Bear, Greg Benford, and a large number of other authors doing daring new work.

Thrust: You are collaborating with Greg Benford on a novel I believe.

Brin: I have three major projects ongoing right now. *The Postman* is essentially finished, due out this October.

My collaboration with Gregory Benford is *In the Heart of the Comet*, in which people are colonizing Halley's Comet in 2062; it will be out in time for Halley's passing. Finally, there is *The Uplift War*, which is sort of a sequel to *Startide Rising*. It takes place at the same time, but I focus on genetically-altered chimpanzees rather than dolphins. There is a funny scene in which a riot breaks out in a working chimps' bar . . .

Thrust: It is interesting that you have experiences as both a scientist and an engineer.

Brin: I've tried to do many things, learn different skills. To a certain extent, an author, particularly an SF author, is successful in direct proportion to how much he or she tries to understand the 20th century. Of course it has been impossible for anyone since possibly Fourier or Benjamin Franklin to completely understand his culture. But we're supposed to try, and grasp as much as we can. Understanding the 20th century is a very synthetic art. We must start with science, the most difficult of the arts, because it is what has changed us the most, making everything else possible, including engineering.

Thrust: How would you compare the roles of science and engineering in your writing? I believe that in much SF, engineering is more important than actual science.

Brin: Doing science in science fiction is hard, and that difficulty has driven away a number of bright authors. Most people doing SF these days have scientific training, because we've already mined the very simple scenarios. There was a period during the early seventies when serious SF writers avoided the solar system, because everyone knew that Pioneer and Voyager would make everything we knew obsolete. Now that those missions are essentially over, you're seeing SF again based in our solar system. To write a science-based SF novel you have to be a scientist or a "science groupie." Greg Bear and Paul Preuss are the best of that group, the people who hover at the edges of science and understand in a verbal way what's going on in many scientific fields, and see the interesting overall trends. With engineering-based SF it's not as difficult. You don't have to find a corner of Nature that hasn't been explored; all you need is a new technique, a clever invention. Engineering SF is much easier and gets less attention.

Thrust: How do you budget your time between science and writing?

Brin: It is ironic that my talents are greater in verbal areas than mathematics. But I proved at Cal Tech that I have some mathematical ability. I got my Ph.D. with an analytical model of comets and asteroids. I could have been a better scientist than I am, but I am

more comfortable with words. There is no question in my mind, however, that mathematics and science are more beautiful than even the most poignant phrase in the English language, and that's very beautiful indeed.

Thrust: Would you have liked to be a better scientist?

Brin: I would rather be a first-rate scientist who writes second-rate hack novels on the side for fun, rather than the opposite. But to be good at either is a joy. I'm not complaining.

Thrust: I guess it's logical, in the sense that science is indispensable to science fiction, while the reverse may not be true.

Brin: The reverse may not be as much true, but half of the scientists I know cut their teeth on SF. It is part of what has made the modern scientist not only more knowledgeable than his predecessors, but in a very fundamental way smarter. We are all smarter than thirty years ago; we process information better, are more curious, more tolerant, and less afraid of being fragile, of being harmed by exposures to other influences or ideas. Look at the public reaction to rock thirty years ago, or jazz fifty or sixty years ago. The saxophone was feared to have a "direct channel of control over the human mind," and would turn good girls into writhing Hottentots! I think people, not just scientists, are getting smarter all the time. Look at some of the dangers we were warned of in SF novels of the past. Take Pohl and Kornbluth's *The Space Merchants* from the early fifties. An excellent novel, and I can't blame them for missing the mark, because back then television looked very frightening, like a medium for the direct control of the human mind. Now, ironically, you hear these fears all the time, but if everyone is worried, how can it be true? We have a nation forewarned against it. Everyone calls it the "boob-tube" or "idiot box," so how can it be so damned influential? Even the people who do spend hours staring at it are not enslaved by its ideas.

Thrust: Do none of Hollywood's ideas control people?

Brin: A few, perhaps, such as the worship of the entertainer, which Hollywood desperately conveys, because they're afraid of going back to being hired hands some day if people ever come to their senses. But people are not as fragile, as gullible, as writers used to believe. Some people watch forty hours of television a week, but in the past they would have stared at a fire. They are not the people who used to read. The fact that they can read at all, even just *PEOPLE* magazine or a Harold Robbins novel, is a marvelous event in human history. The people who used to read still do, and even read far more than in the past. This is good news for those

of us who believe in SF as a literature, not just as *Star Wars* and movie rockets.

Thrust: Since we're getting into mass behavior, what about SF and politics?

Brin: Science fiction is a strange community, politically. The largest group among American authors, and the second-largest group among fans, is made up of libertarians of one form or another. The second largest group among authors and the largest among fans is made up of liberals. True Republicans appear to be a distant third. Why this distribution? I think it's partly because we are almost all Jeffersonians; most Americans have a profound distrust

of authority. We are not believers in the right of the rich and powerful to tell us what to do. Americans are often very cruel to their civil servants, and vulgar in their descriptions of their government. Perhaps that's as it should be. We don't consider the government to have much power over us, and we hire the politicians that we think we need at the time. Let me give an example: America was terrified in 1976. We had gone through the national trauma of Watergate and the fall of Vietnam. We needed someone we could trust, we needed a "Dad". So we hired Jimmy Carter. But he not only restored our faith, he did what no American president has ever done, he chastised us, told us we were spoiled brats. By 1978-79, we were feeling good again, and we didn't want to hear that. We didn't need a daddy, we needed a grandfather who would spoil us and say, "you are wonderful, here are the car keys." We hire whom we want, and the people want an entertainer right now. And that's alright! I disagree with many of Reagan's policies, but all in all I'm amused by the whole thing. Politics of this sort really doesn't matter.

Thrust: Doesn't matter?

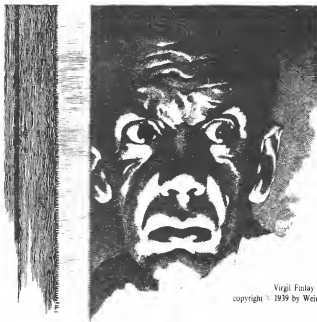
Brin: Not in domestic affairs, where the American Revolution is still going on under the surface, better every year. Such politics do adversely affect foreign policy, because there we don't pay enough attention as a people. Our basic instincts are the same as in 1790—at heart, we're a revolutionary power. From the 1790's to the 1820's, America sent Che Guevara types to Greece, France and South America to help their revolutions. But in our smug isolationism we seem to have forgotten, leaving the Russians with a monopoly in revolution. But I'm not worried. Things are happening here and all over the world that are going to make the bad trends look like nothing. The environment does worry me, however. It's hard for positive trends to make up for poison in the ground.

Thrust: So what are these positive long-term trends?

Brin: Are you asking me to give away SF

plots? OK. We're already seeing one of those trends: the cult of the entertainer is doomed. Let me explain: throughout human history, most civilizations have worshipped the warrior. Modern Western civilization is one of the first in which the warrior is not the ultimate hero; the entertainer is. That's an improvement, at least. But the people who should be the heroes of the women who read *PEOPLE* magazine are the people who made feminism possible, who are responsible for the fact that women, instead of dying fifteen years earlier than men as they did in 1830, now live ten to fifteen years longer. I am talking about mostly engineers, who invented such things as carboic soap,

iron bathtubs and stoves, linen sheets, cotton underwear—all the way to microwave ovens. In a science fiction audience, most people will agree with me. But we still see pretty faces rewarded with millions of dollars just for priming. The real inventors of this century are ignored. But the age of the studio producer, who perpetrated the cult of the entertainer, will be over within ten years. Independent producers already have more power than the studios, and as a result we're getting far better movies. George Lucas or Stephen Spielberg can say, "I'm going to make what I want. Are you going to bankroll me, or shall I get my money elsewhere?" In ten years, groups of six or seven



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hobby filmmakers will have more computing power at their fingertips than Disney had for *Tron*. They will be able to create a rough version of a film, perhaps working directly with an author, and take it to a studio in a position of strength, with the ability to retain creative control. The movie industry will therefore be much more like the book industry. There will be one hundred times more garbage, but a tremendous flowering at the top. The closest parallel can be seen in music; it's the story in *The Music Man*. At the turn of the century when musical instruments became affordable to the rising middle class, suddenly there was a new sheet music industry. There was suddenly being written more music than ever in history. There was a flowering of new forms: jazz, honkytonk--and alienation and fear of what this new music would do. Now you can go down to a local bistro and listen to a musician who would have played for the crowned heads of Europe in the last century. But today he may not even be good enough to get his own records. Despite the amount of garbage available, great musicians who would have stunned Bach now play Bach's music in your living room, with greater fidelity than heard in most of the places Bach himself played! This will happen with movies too, and the worship of the entertainer will then change.

Thrust: While we're touching on worshiping, after reading *Startide Rising* and *Sundiver*, it struck me that the *Uplift* Series appears to be saying, "screw the gods, we can do better ourselves, at least better than the would-be gods from outer space." This contrasts with, say, Clarke's *2001*, which is very trusting that extraterrestrials will come in and save us.

Brin: Most SF scenarios about meeting aliens are now considered scientifically obsolete because of new discoveries about the logic of star travel. If star travel is possible, why haven't they been here yet? Not just during our lifetimes, but during the last billion years! There is no valid evidence that Earth was ever colonized, that the asteroids were ever moved, that Mars was ever terraformed--this is the major question that SF authors have to face. In the *Uplift* Series, I try to discuss the pros and cons of being godlike in certain respects. Men are godlike now, having powers which used to be reserved for angels--we fly, raise from the dead those whose hearts have stopped. The destruction of Sodom is nothing compared to what we could do today. A religious person could contend that God is leaving a trail of His tools for us to pick up and use as we will. And the trail is just beginning. Will we grow morally to be able to use these tools wisely? I think, for example, we will experiment with the genetic heritage of other life forms. We'll agonize over the rights and wrongs and do it anyway.

Thrust: I think one of the most interesting points made in the *Uplift* Series is that we, the human race, don't need anyone to tell us what to do.

Brin: I don't think we will make a paradise or a utopia. But I believe we will continue the same process which has been going on for the last five thousand years; people in the future will not worry about the same things which concern us. They'll assume solutions we can't imagine to war, hunger, injustice, and invent new problems. In *The Uplift War*, I talk about how humankind reaches a certain level of adulthood before contact, being on their way towards a level of sanity which I believe I see signs of now. What makes mankind different from other technologically superior older races in the Galaxy is a heritage of having been frightened children for five thousand years. The horrible mistakes they made during those five millennia of darkness taught them things they could not have learned otherwise.

Thrust: So to make a mathematical analogy, it's like solving a problem for oneself instead of copying down the solution someone else developed.

Brin: Exactly.

Thrust: What is your concept of utopia? I heard you on a panel at LA Con II, and you seemed to believe that we are all anarchists.

Brin: I think that Americans, at least, are mostly anarchists. I think we will outgrow choosing leaders who seek the silly ego rewards of bossing people around. Such a person does not get the most creativity out of his people. According to the famous Chinese philosopher Lao-Tseu, there are three types of rulers: he who rules savagely and is obeyed out of fear; he who rules wisely and is obeyed out of love; and he who rules with an almost invisible hand and when finished achieving a goal says to the people, "look what we have done." The finest example of the third type in the United States was never a president, but may have been the greatest man of his century: Benjamin Franklin, whom I suspect was the true inventor of the United States. A true utopia would be reasonable, rational adult human beings, occasionally getting excited and even being irrational, but all in a polite way. I once read an SF story that said there should only be two laws: "Thou shalt not offend others"; and, "Thou shalt not allow thyself to be offended too easily." Reasonable people, with a common sense of right and wrong, should be able to settle their disagreements by compromise.

Thrust: We seem a long way from being those rational adults, not easily offended.

Brin: Yes, but what you just said is a

manifestation of the process. Throughout human history, most peoples have been taught to be satisfied with the status quo. But your remark shows that your standard is higher than the already just, humane, tolerant society in which you live. So much higher are your standards that you demean that society. This dogma of criticism is a wonderful phenomenon of our imperfect but improving Western society, and so is science fiction.

Thrust: Are you well read in Eastern philosophies?

Brin: Like many physicists, I have been attracted by Eastern philosophy in an amused sort of way. When a modern physicist looks at Eastern philosophy, he is not seeking Truth; he knows that Western science is the best thing that ever happened to the search for Truth. Instead he is looking for beauty, and for cross-pollination from other concepts, other ways at looking at the world that he can tend and grow with the powerful techniques of mathematics. When physicists go off learning Zen, it is not because they are abandoning physics. It's saying, "I am so secure in my role as a scientist, as an engineer, that I am not threatened by examining other views of the world."

Thrust: Constructing paradoxes can also be a source of pleasure.

Brin: Certainly. And we live in a society which rewards uncovering new viewpoints, rewards self-criticism, actively seeks change. It's the civilization of science fiction! Look at the fundamental Jungian archetype of child-birth: In 1977, a few liberal obstetricians opened delivery rooms to husbands, with great trepidation, and then found that wives were less panicky and delivered easier. Now nearly all fathers attend their children's births. It became a tradition within five years! No SF novelist would have dared predict such adaptability to changing archetypes. At about the same time women began showing up as police officers. Look at how quickly we adapted to that, a woman cop with a nightstick saying, "Move along, buddy." We give ourselves too little credit for adaptability, but a truly creative person does not ask for credit, but rather is always looking for the next question. Everyone is wondering when the world of science fiction will come true. They aren't paying attention! The world we live in now is profoundly science fictional, alienating and weird, from the point of view of someone transported here from even just twenty years ago. We are building new human beings, new societies, new myths. The hilarious thing is that we'll never be fully aware of it. The future is a glimmering, a phantom. After all, we live for our children. As long as they exist, the future is now.

Thrust: Thank you, David Brin.

IMMORTALISM: "The Long-Range View"



Marvin Kaye

PART TWO: BEYOND THE COMFORT PRINCIPLE

Villainy is not the exclusive province of fabulists or dramatists. One of the most repulsive characters I have ever encountered appears in a relatively obscure Platonic dialogue, *Gorgias*. In it, Socrates debates a trio of philosophic opponents. The last and most formidable is Callicles, a towering symbol of intellectual dishonesty. Totally unwilling to alter his personal opinion even when his arguments are demolished by Socrates, Callicles resorts to ridicule, mendacity, emotional smokescreening of the issues, and barefaced self-contradiction. Ultimately, when every other ruse fails, he simply walks away.

Every age has its casuists. The average citizen, stultified by the historical and cultural omnipresence of death, becomes an unwilling Callicles for the death-wish when confronted with the concept of immortality:

"This freezing business will never

work. It sounds too fantastic."

Like the airplane? Electricity? Black holes? Cryosurgery?

"Even if it could work, I don't want to come back to a world full of strangers."

You're already living in one.

"But what about my family?"

Can't they also elect to live?

"Forget it. Death is a natural part of life."

Like poverty and cancer and war.

* * *

That was a straw argument. Easy to demolish. But the spirit of Callicles is much more difficult to rout. It goes beyond mere conservatism. To seriously consider an enormously extended lifespan (cut short solely by what Shaw calls the statistically inevitable accident) is to awaken humanity's aversion to hubris—that Promethean daring to challenge the cosmos at its own game.

Dread of hubris depends on one of the axioms of Western culture, a pheno-

menon I will term "the comfort principle." When our death-wish apologist invoked cultural shock and the presence of loved ones as excuses, he was really saying that the process of readjustment into some radically restructured future would be so traumatic that he could not bear the pain.

It is useless to argue that culture shock is preferable to dissolution. Tomorrow is an institution that holds both promise and threat. Those who want to live there must be prepared to accept pain as a necessary part of the life without foreseeable end. But the *a priori* value of life in spite of spiritual upheaval is underprized in our society. How can it be otherwise? The most fundamental purpose of religion is to satisfy the comfort principle. Yes, self-sacrifice is paid lip service by most sects, but the anthropological underpinnings of faith grow from those primal longings for comfort that stir in every human breast. Thus primitive worship provides a sense of community in its consciousness-deadening rituals of dance, song and drugs (all of which are, of course, staples of the American "pop" culture). When tribal folk begin to crave more than a bit of earth by the fireside—when Mind makes itself felt in spite of itself—the easy community of fireside worship falters. Shamans and their descendants, priests, are forced to devise increasingly elaborate ceremonies to recapture that sense of oneness that once came easily. Today's spiritual angst is the logical outcome of this dialectic between orthodox and rational humanism—for history is a process whereby institutions evolve and topple. To paraphrase my colleague Parke Godwin, change is the painful price of Mind.

The immortalist cannot minimize the terrors inherent in the decision to live. If we strive toward eternity, we must expect growing pains. Bertrand Russell once wrote that there is a basic cowardice in the need for faith in order to face reality. Yet one does not have to be an agnostic to opt for an extended life. In his important book, *The Prospect of Immortality*, Robert Ettinger very persuasively counters any alleged religious objections the layman may advance. In fact, says Ettinger, orthodoxy is not opposed either by tenet or interpretation to the idea of long life, even if achieved by the freeze-wait-reanimate system of cryogenic interment. Many clergymen have supported the idea.

The problem, therefore, is not one of dogma but rather the anthropological roots of the Church. So long as people cling to Community as a form of self-effacement, so long as humanity craves the spiritual highlight of the comfort principle, civilization will be unable to consider long life as a genuine option.

Those of us who are fascinated by the idea of traveling toward the future must never forget that the path will be thorny. We must be prepared to tread upon a wilderness of nettles.

Next issue: "The Dance Beyond Death".

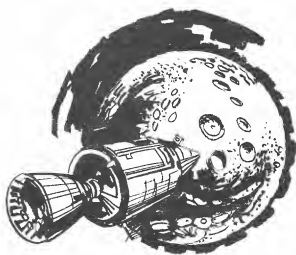
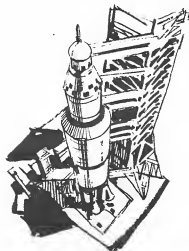
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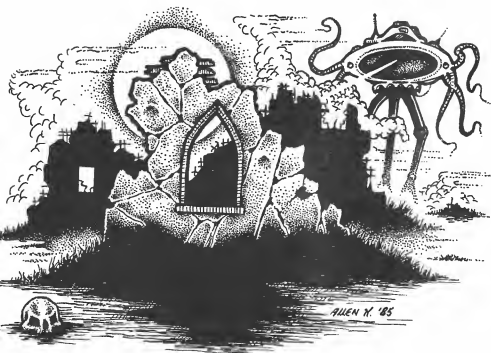
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WORDS & PICTURES



movie reviews

by Darrell Schweitzer

It's not something that happens very often: a story wins a Hugo and/or Nebula award, and within a few years, it is made into a movie. Barry Longyear's "Enemy Mine" is, to my knowledge, only the third Hugo winner ever to be filmed (the other two being *Dune* and "Flowers for Algernon"), and the only one to be completed just a small number of years after the award. The number of real SF books and short fiction of any kind chosen for film production is still dishearteningly small. More often, millions of dollars are poured into abortions like *Silent Running* or *The Black Hole*, whose scripts, if submitted as SF novels, would never sell to even the most naive or desperate editor in the field.

Written SF and filmed SF remain far apart. They come from different roots, and until recently have had virtually nothing in common.

Wolfgang (Das Boot) Peterson's *Enemy Mine* is at least evidence that the

movie industry is slowly learning how to read.

It begins inauspiciously enough, with an unconvincing space battle that looks like the television version of Buck Rogers on a bad day. Not only do the small fighter ships whoosh and bank in a vacuum, but one of them flies a loop so small that it couldn't have been done by anything faster than a biplane.

After that discouraging scene, the action adjourns to a nearby planet. The planetary landscapes are stages with nicely done painted backdrops, but they look like stages with painted backdrops.

This is allegedly the first major German science fiction movie since *World War II*. From it we may conclude that German SF cinema is decades behind that in America. Technically, *Enemy Mine* is on about the same level as *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* (1964).

As drama, however, it has more going for it. The basic storyline of "Enemy Mine" is that human and alien

fighter pilots, enemies who know virtually nothing about each other's cultures, find themselves stranded together on a deserted planet. In order to survive, they must cooperate. Understanding follows, and they become friends. The hermaphroditic alien gives birth, but dies in the process. The human raises the alien child, and, having learned the language and something of the culture of its people, takes the child back to its home planet and recites the child's incredibly complicated lineage at a solemn alien ceremony--that being the greatest honor and most important duty of a parent or guardian in that alien culture.

It almost works in the movie version, due to excellent performances by Dennis Quaid (Earthman) and Louis Gossett, Jr. (alien). The movie is at its best when just the two of them are in the scene, and there are no fancy special effects. I am particularly pleased to see the "Mickey Mouse" bit from the original story used: the alien asks the Earthman where he learned such wisdom as he possesses, and he flipily answered that he got it from Mickey Mouse. By this point the alien has genuinely confided the cultural wisdom of his race, as taught by their greatest teacher. The Earthman therefore continues to cite the wisdom of Mickey Mouse, because he respects the alien too much to admit that he was being flippant. The result is both poignant and funny, in just the right balance.

As soon as the script begins to deviate from the Longyear story, it gets into trouble. In the story, the Earthman and the alien child are merely rescued in the end. But the movie was decided to require (perhaps genuinely) a bang-up ending. So there are these nasty human miners who come and are busily raping the planet. They use aliens as slaves. (Since there is a war on, the government lets them get away with it.) The climax of the movie comes when the alien child, who has never seen another being except our hero, wanders off and is enslaved.

From this point to the end of the movie, problems of logic multiply. The hero tries to rescue the alien child, and is shot and left for dead. Then the space force authorities (or whatever they are called), which couldn't be bothered to rescue him earlier, manages to find his "body" in short order. Then apparently nobody takes a close look at him, because he is almost ejected into space before the burial detail notices that he is still alive. In his delirium, he speaks the alien language. His superiors make very ominous remarks about "working for the other side," which would seem to indicate that the war is still going on. But when the hero steals a fighter craft, shoots his way out of the space station, and goes back to rescue the alien child, and all the other enslaved aliens in the bargain, his space force comrades back him up, and everything is fine in the end, with the war and the hero's gross violations of military discipline somehow

forgotten by all concerned.

So on the negative side, *Enemy Mine* is technically crude and doesn't always make sense. On the plus side, it has good performances, it is well paced, and it is aimed at an adult audience, which is rare for an SF movie these days. It is an honest effort, based on real, written science fiction, and it deserves your support for that alone. It may even become a Hugo finalist, since there were so few major SF films in 1985, most being mental popcorn aimed at a teenage audience.

But even among popcorn, there is such a thing as gourmet popcorn, no more substantial than the standard stuff, but lots fancier. Let me put in a good word for Steven Spielberg's *Young Sherlock Holmes*, which is an absolutely charming film, one of the best flicks Disney ever made, even though its plot is not so much plausible as ridiculous.

The premise is that, contrary to Conan Doyle's explicit statement to the contrary, Holmes and Watson knew each other as teenagers. In fact, they were schoolmates for a short while, before Holmes was expelled in a trumped-up cheating scandal. The charm of the picture comes from the very convincing performances from two boy-actors, who develop plausible characterizations of youths who would grow up to be the familiar Holmes and Watson. We see Holmes put his brilliance to serious use for the first time. We find out where his famous pipe came from. We see him don the deerstalker cap for the first time. He even gets to say, "The game is afoot," for the first time. (Some one else, however, says, "Elementary, my dear Holmes," an in-joke that was probably irresistible.) Watson is a clumsy fat kid who could easily turn into the class victim if he did not come under Holmes' protection.

The plot is sort of an improved version of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, and although improved, it still lacks much in the way of logic.

First, we are asked to believe that mid-19th century Egyptians still take the old gods—Osiris, Anubis and that crowd—seriously. This is what I call the Mummy Movie Fallacy—complete ignorance of the fact that Egypt has been a Muslim country since the 7th century, and that for some centuries before that it was a Christian one.

But wait, there's more. It seems that British imperialists dug up five mummified princesses and the local villagers are so outraged by this desecration that violence ensued. The villagers got the worst of it, but an Anglo-Egyptian brother and sister, vowing hideous revenge, managed to disguise themselves in Victorian London, where they established their cult of crazed Osiris-worshippers. They also manage to build a life-sized plywood pyramid underneath a warehouse without anybody noticing an army of odd chaps smuggling a thousand tons of lumber in through the back door. The cult then proceeds to kidnap beautiful girls and mummify them

alive amid spectacular ceremony. And then, at the climax of this gory business, when a gigantic wooden goat's head is about to drool hot embalming fluid all over the helpless heroine, Sherlock Holmes is able to observe that he need merely remove one beam to bring the whole place down like a house of cards. (Haven't these crazed cultists ever heard of building codes?)

Add to this numerous other oddments: a flying machine that's so ungainly that were only left wondering how they accomplished the scenes (mating, I guess); the climatic fight scene in which young Holmes, played by a boy who looks like he'll grow up to be Basil Rathbone, and weighting no more than 120 pounds, outwrestles an athletic adult, then matches him with swords (where the swords came from was never clear either); and numerous unlikely escapes. (If three dozen sword-wielding adults go after two unnamed teenagers, the usual result can be expected to be minced teenager. Whenever that is about to happen in this movie, a piece of debris falls just right.)

But there is nice use of detail, humor, inventiveness, fast action, and effective characterizations. It is all quite delightful—stupid, but delightful nonetheless.

Turning from movies to television, but staying with Spielberg, let me mention that right before I wrote this column, I watched an episode of *Amazing Stories* called "Vanessa in the Garden," directed by Clint Eastwood, and starring somebody or other.

It was about this late 19th century painter who is so shattered by the death of his beloved that he burns all his paintings of her. His career seems in ruins. He is unable to paint. But then he finds one more painting and goes to burn that too, but is thwarted, first by a draft blowing out the match, and then by apparitions of his dead lover, who seems to have the ability to step out of the painting. She becomes more and more real until, somehow, she has returned, and he is willing to accept what has happened. The end.

This was quite remarkable because it was the first adult episode of *Amazing Stories* so far. The others have been strictly for the early-teen market, the best being farces (for instance the mummy episode and the one about the school bully who becomes literally magnetically attracted to the ugliest girl around). The one exception was the long-long episode, "The Mission," a pretty good drama until the cop-out fantasy ending.

But aside from the first three quarters of "The Mission," "Vanessa in the Garden" is the first *Amazing* episode to deal with adult situations and emotions. It does so rather lamely, but at least it tries.

The main problem exhibited by other *Amazing* episodes is an almost total lack of story sense. All we have is the opening situation, the statement of the premise, and a wish-fulfillment ending.

Like countless slush-pile stories I have seen, these end almost where they should have begun, and lack virtually all of the essential parts of a complete plot structure. In one episode, aliens came to Hollywood because their entire culture was based on old American TV reruns they managed to pick up. It was amusing to see these peanut-faced aliens doing "I Love Lucy" routines, but the joke wore thin quickly. There was no conflict, buildup, character changes—everyone just spent the show acting cute.

You may complain that TV episodes are pure formula, but it could be worse: the folks at *Amazing* don't even know the formulas yet. The show can best be described as what *The Twilight Zone* would have been like if done by the Disney Studios when they were running on auto-pilot after Walt's death. (You know, the folks who brought us *The Black Hole*.)

The Twilight Zone (or as it could be called, *The New Twilight Zone*, as opposed to *The Twilight Zone Classic*) is, on the other hand, accomplishing great things. Not all of the episodes are good, some are even dumb. But under the guidance of Alan Brennert and for a while Harlan Ellison (was anyone surprised when Ellison quit over a dispute on the content of the Christmas show?), the show has brought us some of the best SF/fantasy programming in years, even decades. There have been three Ellison story adaptations, "Shatterday," "One Life, Furnished in Early Poverty," and "Paladin of the Lost Hour." Of these, the last struck me as rather feeble, the premise and storyline just too strained and sentimental. The other two worked fairly well. Standouts have included a long piece by Brennert about a college student of our time who finds himself in telepathic contact with a girl in Puritan New England, and a very short one by no writer I have ever heard of about an alien thing that comes back in the space shuttle and starts assuming the forms of people and objects, including an atomic bomb. There was also a good adaption of William Wu's Hugo nominee, "Wong's Lost and Found Emporium," in *AMAZING STORIES*, the magazine. I also have fond memories of the episode about the monster that lived under a kid's bed. It is a story of ironic revenge on a child who transgresses moral law, in the finest EC Comics tradition.

That monster-under-the-bed episode is also noteworthy because it has juvenile characters but concerns adult matters—and completely beats Spielberg at his own game. As of early in the season, *Amazing Stories* is going better in the ratings, either due to Spielberg's name or its appeal to an audience of the dulltest television illiterates, but *Twilight Zone* is so much better that there is hardly room for comparison. *Amazing* I continue to watch as a curiosity, but *Twilight Zone* is the first television show in a long time that I actually look forward to seeing.

THE ALIENATED CRITIC

A LOOK AT THE JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

Every year since 1973, the John W. Campbell Award has been awarded to the best new writer to have begun being published in the field in the previous two years. Therefore every writer entering the field for the past fifteen years, since 1971, has been eligible for recognition of their potential at the very start of their career.

The Campbell Award (not to be confused with the John W. Campbell Memorial Award) is voted on by the same people as the standard Hugo Awards, the members of that year's World Science Fiction Convention (Worldcon). It is therefore a fan popularity award, as opposed to an award presented by professionals (the Nebula Award) or one awarded by a jury of experts.

So how well have we done in choosing the field's most promising new writers? The iconoclasts and elitists among THRUST's readers will have an immediate tendency to think that of course the award has been far from successful in recognizing the quality and potential of new SF and Fantasy authors. (I must admit, that was my knee-jerk reaction.) One can make arguments on this sort of issue based on anecdotal evidence forever, but isn't there some less subjective way to address this question?

One objective measure which could be used to assess the accuracy of the Campbell Awards would be to look at the number of awards and nominations subsequently garnered by authors who won or were nominated for the Campbell Award, versus those authors who were passed over for the Campbell. Have the winners and nominees for a Campbell proven to be better than their contemporaries who were not so honored?

I decided to take it upon myself to do the research needed to give an objective assessment of the success of the Campbell Award. In order to make the task simpler, I decided to restrict my criteria for auctorial success to nominations for Hugo and Nebula Awards in the fiction categories (novel, novella, novelette, and short story). I have therefore ignored the various World Fantasy Awards, the Philip K. Dick Award, the John W. Campbell Memorial Award, non-fiction Hugo awards, foreign awards, and other such honors. And, for this analysis at least, I will assume that authoring Hugo and Nebula nominated fiction correlates very strongly with being a good science fiction writer.

It didn't take long to see that a lot of the field's best writers have entered the field in the last fifteen years, and were thus eligible for the Campbell. I also found that there were quite a few writers I considered as "young turks" who actually began being published before 1971. A banner crop of writers entered SF in 1970, missing being eligible for the Campbell by just one year, including Michael Bishop, Ed Bryant, Pamela Sargent, Jack Dann, George Zebrowski and Lee Killough. Joe Haldeman and Ian Watson, to name two, entered the field in 1969, and James Tiptree, Jr. (Alice Sheldon) in 1968. I was surprised to find that Gardner Dozois and Gene Wolfe were first published in 1966, and Greg Benford began in 1965—I have always thought of all three as writers of the 1970s. And Larry Niven's first story was published in 1964. (That makes me feel old for some reason.)

But on to the business at hand. How successful have the Campbell Award nominees and winners been compared to other non-nominated authors who began in the same year? To begin with, let's look at all the Campbell nominees who have received at least one Hugo or Nebula Award nomination.

The results of my research are shown in Table 1. The clear winners, not surprisingly, are John Varley and George R. R. Martin. Varley has 22 award nominations (4 wins) and Martin has 20 (3 wins) through 1985. But neither won the Campbell Award! Varley as nominated in both 1975 and 1976, but lost to P. J. Plauger and Tom Reamy respectively. (Anyone know what happened to P. J.?) Martin was nominated only in 1973 (although I think he should have been eligible in 1974), and was beaten by Jerry Pournelle, who just happens to be third on the list of Campbell Award nominees in Table 1. It may surprise some newer fans that Pournelle has 8 award nominations, and only half of them are for Niven collaborations. But he was a regular Hugo nominee for several years in the mid-1970s. (I counted collaborative nominations the same as single author nominations; I guess I could have counted them as half nominations, in which case Jerry would fall back into the crowd of authors at 6 nominations.)

The four Campbell nominees with 6 Hugo/Nebula nominations are David Brin, Joan Vinge, Carolyn Cherryh and Orson Scott Card. Only Cherryh and Card won the Campbell, but Card is also the only



DOUG FRATZ

one of the four who has won neither the Hugo nor Nebula. 8rfin is the prodigy here, with four wins since 1982. 8rfin lost the Campbell to Alexits Gilliland in 1982, while Vinge (like Varley) lost to Reamy in 1976.

Coming in with 5 award nominations are five authors, Spider Robinson, Lisa Tuttle, Lucius Shepard, Bruce Sterling and George Alec Effinger. Shepard is the real prodigy of this list--1985 could be renamed "The Year of Shepard." Three of these five were Campbell winners; Tuttle and Robinson shared the award in 1974 (the only time that happened), as well as Shepard's inevitable 1985 win. Sterling lost in 1978 to Card; Effinger (like George Martin) lost in 1973 to Pournelle.

The three Campbell authors with four Hugo/Nebula nominations are Barry Longyear, Tom Reamy, and Michael Swanwick. Longyear was a very hot commodity 1979-1981, being nominated for the Campbell for two years, winning it in the second year (1980). Reamy's untimely death cut short his remarkable career at 4 award nominations and only one win (a Nebula) to go with his Campbell. Swanwick has managed to lose four Nebula Awards to go with his 1982 Campbell loss to Gilliland.

Joseph H. Delaney stands alone with 3 nominations, all Hugos, matching his lack of success at the Campbell, which he lost in 1983 to Paul O. Williams and in 1984 to R. A. MacAvoy.

There's a whole slew of Campbell nominees with two award nominations each: Charnas, Monteleone, Plauger, Scholz, Sucharitkul, Palmer, MacAvoy and Petry. Landis completes the list with a single nomination. Plauger, Sucharitkul and MacAvoy won their Campbell, in 1975, 1981 and 1984 respectively. Of all of those with two or less award nominations, only Charnas won any awards, a Nebula in 1980.

An overall assessment after looking at Table 1 would have to be that Campbell Awards nominations have gone to a lot of good writers, although the actual winners of the award don't, on the average, look more successful than the losers. It is interesting to note that there appears to be a great prejudice towards authors with early novels. This is especially true from the period of 1979 to 1984, with the winners being Donaldson, Longyear, Sucharitkul, Gilliland, Williams and MacAvoy. Shepard broke that trend in 1985 just as it looked like it could become permanent. But overall I think we all did fairly well in recognizing some top-class writing talent in the first two years of the authors' careers.

So how many Campbell nominees and winners have never been nominated for even one Hugo or Nebula Award? I've listed them in Table 2. Twenty-nine authors have been nominated for Campbells but not for any Hugo/Nebula awards for their fiction. Nine of those were

actually nominated for the Campbell twice each. But only three won the Campbell: Stephen Donaldson in 1979, Gilliland in 1982 and Williams in 1983. Some of the names of authors lacking award nominations seen in Table 2 are, I believe, explainable, but some come to me as great surprises. Several of these authors have contributed significant quantities of high level SF and fantasy in recent years, and it is surprising they have not received even one Hugo or Nebula nomination: Donaldson, Elizabeth Lynn, James Hogan, Charles Sheffield, Robert Stallman and Lisa Goldstein clearly fall into that category.

Some of the awardless authors in Table 2 are because they have been prolific novelists (often writing series of novels) without any real standout works. I think writers in this category include M. A. Foster, Jack Chalker, Donaldson, Hogan, Robert Forward, Gilliland, Williams, Warren Norwood and Joel Rosenberg, and to a lesser extent Arsen Darnay, Sheffield, Lynn Abbey, and Diane Duane. Others are novelists who have been too unprolific, including Cynthia Felice, Lisa Goldstein, Sandra Miesel, and (sadly) Robert Stallman. Note the almost total domination in this list of novelists after 1975, while the 1973-1975 names are primarily short story writers from the magazines. This just about coincides with the Worldcon becoming a huge event, with membership (and therefore Hugo nominators and voters) going far beyond organized fandom. (Note: Table 2 does not include any 1985 Campbell nominees, since they have not really had a good chance to be nominated yet for fiction awards.)

So, of the 53 authors nominated once or twice for the Campbell Award from 1973 to 1984, 24 have gone on to be nominated for Hugos and/or Nebulas for their fiction, while 29 have not. Only three of the fourteen Campbell winners from 1973 to 1985 have failed to garner fiction award nominations. That's not a bad record, on the face of it. But only half of the data is in. How about the authors passed over for Campbell nominations during their first two years in the SF field?

Table 3 lists the 15 authors who have entered the SF field since 1971 (and thus were eligible for the Campbell for at least one year) which have earned two or more Hugo or Nebula Award nominations; the table also includes the year of their first SF short fiction and novel publications (if my research is accurate). Twelve more SF writers entering the field since 1971 have earned only one fiction award nomination. I can also think of at least eight significant SF authors passed over by both the Campbell and the fiction awards to date.

The "winner" according to my data in Table 3 is Vonda McIntyre. She has received 11 fiction award nominations, five Hugos and six Nebulas, won three of those awards, but was not nominated for the Campbell. Can anyone figure out why she was not nominated for the Campbell in 1974 or 1975? I think she should

TABLE 1: CAMPBELL AWARD NOMINEES WITH HUGO OR NEBULA AWARD NOMINATIONS

Author	Years of Campbell Nomination /Win	Hugo Awards		Nebula Awards		Total Award Nominations
		Won	Lost	Won	Lost	
John Varley	1975, 1976	2	13	2	5	22
George R. R. Martin	1973	2	9	1	8	20
Jerry Pournelle	1973	0	6	0	2	8
David Brin	1982	2	2	0	0	6
Joan Vinge	1976	2	2	0	2	6
C. J. Cherryh	1977	2	2	0	2	6
Orson Scott Card	1978	0	4	0	2	6
Spider Robinson	1974	3	1	1	0	5
Lisa Tuttle	1973, 1974	0	2	1	2	5
Lucius Shepard	1985	0	2	0	3	5
Bruce Sterling	1978	0	2	0	3	5
George Alec Effinger	1973	0	3	0	2	5
Barry Longyear	1979, 1980	1	2	1	0	4
Tom Reamy	1976	0	2	0	1	4
Michael Swanwick	1982	0	2	1	4	4
Joseph H. Delaney	1983, 1984	0	3	0	0	3
Suzy McKee Charnas	1975	0	0	1	1	2
Tom Monteleone	1974	0	0	0	2	2
P. J. Plauger	1975	0	1	0	1	2
Carter Scholz	1977	0	1	0	1	2
Sontow Sucharitkul	1980, 1981	0	2	0	0	2
David Palmer	1983	0	2	0	0	2
R. A. MacAvoy	1984	0	1	0	1	2
Susan Petry	1981	0	1	0	1	2
Geoffrey Landis	1985	0	1	0	0	1

TABLE 2: CAMPBELL AWARD NOMINEES WITH NO HUGO OR NEBULA AWARD NOMINATIONS

Author	Year of Campbell Nomination/Win
Ruth Berman	1973
Robert Thurston	1973
Jesse Miller	1974
Guy Snyder	1974
Alan Brennert	1975
Felix G. Gotschalk	1975
Brenda Pearce	1975
Arsen Darnay	1976
M. A. Foster	1976, 1977
Jack L. Chalker	1977, 1978
Stephen Donaldson	1978, 1979
Elizabeth Lynn	1978, 1979
Cynthia Felice	1979
James P. Hogan	1979
Charles Sheffield	1979
Lynn Abbey	1980
Diane Duane	1980, 1981
Karen Jollie	1980
Alan Ryan	1980
Kevin Christensen	1981
Robert L. Forward	1981
Robert Stallman	1981, 1982
Alexis Gilliland	1982
Paul O. Williams	1982, 1983
Lisa Goldstein	1983, 1984
Sandra Miesel	1983
Warren G. Norwood	1983, 1984
Joel Rosenberg	1984
Sheri Tepper	1984

entering the field.

Greg Bear and Howard Waldrop, with 6 award nominations each, are two more cases of slow starters. Bear began with some short fiction in 1978, and produced two weak novels in 1979 (*Heigira* and *Psychone*); he did not begin producing top quality work in quantity until several years later. Waldrop is a similar story a few years earlier. A weak early novel, *The Texas-Israeli War: 1999* in 1974, preceded by several years the start of his award-quality work. William Gibson, who has four award nominations, winning both Hugo and Nebula for *Neuromancer* in 1985, but losing the Nebula for short fiction in 1981 and 1982, appears to have followed the same pattern to some degree, although I am not really sure when he was eligible for the Campbell.

Hilbert Schenck was also a slow starter, and is one of the rare hard SF writers to have started in Ferman's *F&SF*, where he began appearing in 1977 (or maybe even earlier). In 1980 he turned novelist with *Wave Rider*, followed by *At the Eye of the Ocean* (1981) and *A Rose For Armageddon* (1982). His work began being nominated for awards only in 1983 with a Nebula Award nomination for "The Geometry of Narrative," followed in 1984 with Hugo nominations for that story and "Hurricane Claude" and in 1985 with a Hugo nomination for "Silicon Muse."

Octavia Butler has three award nominations, with her two wins coming on the same powerful story in 1985. I believe that Butler entered the field as a novelist (*Mind of My Mind* in 1977) and

has only recently turned to short fiction. Butler developed slowly into one of the field's best talents, so I suppose her lack of Campbell nomination is reasonable. Timothy Zahn, on the other hand, entered the field in 1979 as a regular *ANALOG* writer, and after three or four years began having novels published, bringing sufficient recognition that he lost a short fiction Hugo each year from 1983 to 1985. If Zahn had used 2 years instead of four to develop, I think a Campbell nomination would have been forthcoming.

The final author with three award nominations in Table 3 is Michael Shea, a very explainable case: Shea is exceedingly unprolific. He published an early novel (*Quest for Similibis*, 1974), but did his best work only during a period running approximately from 1979 to 1982, wherein he garnered a Hugo nomination, two Nebula nominations and a World Fantasy Award for his second novel, *Niffit The Lean*. His 1974 novel seems to have prevented a probable Campbell nomination for Shea in the 1980 or 1981.

Five authors in Table 3 have two awards each: Marta Randall, Parke Godwin, John Kessel, Donald Kinsbury, and John Crowley. Only Kessel ever won one, a Nebula in 1982. I am surprised that Marta Randall was not Campbell Award nominated in 1976 or 1977. Her first novel, *Islands*, received a Nebula nomination in 1976. (Doesn't it seem like a lot of the unexplainable Campbell non-nominees are female? Have I uncovered a hidden vein of misogyny running through

-----continued on page 19.

have been eligible in 1975, and that was well after she received both Hugo and Nebula attention for "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand." I would welcome any proposed explanations for the McIntyre paradox.

Next comes Connie Willis, also with 8 award nominations, including two Nebula Award wins, and no Campbell nomination. From everything I can see, she should have been nominated in at least 1981, if not 1980 as well, since she was recognized in 1980 with a Hugo nomination for *Daisy in the Sun*. But Willis may just have been a touch too slow—she began as a short story writer in the ill-fated *GALILEO* in 1979, but except for the one Hugo nominated story, didn't begin doing large amounts of top rate work until 1982. By then, the Campbell had passed her by.

Next on Table 3 comes Kim Stanley Robinson with eight award nominations, but a surprising zero wins (a situation which will be corrected one of these days, and probably repeatedly). But Robinson's situation is fully understandable. He made his slow and patient start as a short story writer for *Orbit* and *Universe* anthology series, edited by Damon Knight and Terry Carr, respectively. He did not begin producing top quality SF in noticeable quantity, therefore, until six to eight years after

TABLE 3: CAMPBELL AWARD NON-NOMINEES WITH MORE THAN ONE HUGO OR NEBULA NOMINATION

Author	Year of 1st SF		Hugo Awards		Nebula Awards		Total Award Nominations
	Short	Novel	Won	Lost	Won	Lost	
Vonda McIntyre	1973	1975	1	4	2	4	11
Connie Willis	1979	1982	0	4	2	2	8
Kim Stanley Robinson	1976	1984	0	3	0	5	8
Greg Bear	1978	1979	0	1	5	0	6
Howard Waldrop	1972	1974	0	2	1	3	6
William Gibson	1981?	1985	1	0	1	2	4
Hilbert Schenck	1977?	1980	0	3	0	1	4
Octavia Butler	?	1977	1	1	1	0	3
Timothy Zahn	1979	1983	0	3	0	0	3
Michael Shea	?	1974	0	1	0	2	3
Marta Randall	1975	1976	0	0	0	2	2
Parke Godwin	1977	1979	0	1	0	1	2
John Kessel	1982?	1985	0	1	1	0	2
Donald Kinsbury	1975	1982	0	2	0	0	2
John Crowley	?	1975	0	1	0	1	2
<p>One Hugo/Nebula Nomination: Jack C. Haldeman II, Stephen Utley, James P. Kelly, Eric Vinnicoff, Nancy Kress, Lewis Shiner, Stephen Gould, William F. Wu, Leigh Kennedy, Jack McDewitt.</p> <p>Notable New Writers With No Hugo/Nebula Nominations: Michael P. Kube-McDowell, Richard Cowper, Paul Preuss, Tim Powers, John Shirley, Rudy Rucker, Pat Cadigan, Tanith Lee.</p>							

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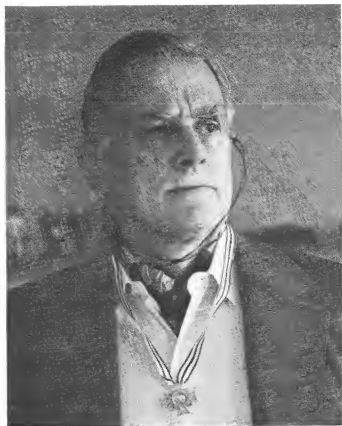
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INTERVIEW:

STERLING E. LANIER

BY
DARRELL
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Sterling Lanier is perhaps best known for his two post-holocaust adventures, *Hiero's Journey* (1973) and its sequel, *The Unforsaken Hiero* (1983). He has distinguished himself in the horror-fantasy field with the *Brigadier Ffellowes* series, about the eventful life of a crusty, talkative adventurer of the sort whose literary ancestry goes back to Jorkens, Allan Quatermain, and beyond. Some of these stories were collected in *The Peculiar Exploits of Brigadier Ffellowes* (1972), and others have appeared since in *THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION*.

Lanier is also the author of *The War of the Lot* (1969) and *Menace Under Marswood* (1983). He is a Harvard graduate, a former editor of Chilton books (where he persuaded them to buy *Dune*), and a sculptor.

Thrust: What were you doing before you were writing?

Lanier: I was a graduate student in anthropology and archeology for almost six years at the University of Pennsylvania, and when I was close to a doctorate, I suddenly realized that a lifetime of teaching lay ahead of me and that I wasn't a teacher. So I walked out. I then had a brief pro-tem job looking up historic records at Winterthur Museum to find out, if we could, who had left what piece of furniture to whom in the Colonial period. I spent a lot of time reading Colonial wills, which are depressing, but as complete as

grocery lists. If they had even a bottle cap to leave, they noted it. Finally I went to no less than a psychiatrist and said, "Look, I have no goals or roots any longer." He gave me one of the most simple tests that I have ever run across, and I've recommended it to many others since. He made me draw a line down the middle of a page, and put on the left side everything in life that I did not like, ranging from food to clothes, to anything, no matter how trivial. In the right column I put down everything I did like. What came out was a very strong equation which said something to do with writing. So I applied for an editorial job and got it. I was an editor for about eight years. I left that because I had the feeling that maybe I could write. I was also at the same time involved in another business, which I abandoned five years ago but may take up again, doing certain odd kinds of sculpture, which I sell to jewellers and to places like the Smithsonian Museum. [He displays a metal figure about three inches high.] This particular piece is one of my chessmen.

Thrust: It appears to be a bureaucrat of some kind.

Lanier: It is a Pentagon Knight. [He laughs.] With a briefcase and tin sword. Anyway, I started very slowly to try to write. I am not a fast writer. I'm a rather cold-blooded writer, because of the editorial training. If I'm dissatisfied with what I'm writing, I tear it up and start again. Beyond that, concerning my own career, all I

can say is that I try to write the sort of thing that I would like to read.

Thrust: What kind of editing did you do?

Lanier: I had several areas of alleged expertise that nobody else wanted: military and naval history, natural history, and I started at that company science fiction and fantasy. I had a number of triumphs there that pleased me immensely. I grabbed Poul Anderson's Flandry stories and put them into hardcover, and I put Jim Schmitz back into hardcover, but the real epoch-maker was to find an eight-part serial in *ANALOG* that no publisher in the country would touch: *Dune* by Frank Herbert. I argued it through the editorial board, and when I left that company, they were so foolish, financially speaking, that they abandoned all sequel rights. The only one they ever had was the first one. But if the movie of *Dune* is even half-way well-done, somebody is going to make a lot of money, including, I suppose, what's left of Chilton Book Company. Also, I managed to get books out on oddities like the ironclads used in the Civil War, for people who like that sort of technical, military and naval stuff, and one or two very good natural history volumes, including Roger Caras' *Dangerous to Man*, and finally, the last big book that my friend Ivan Sanderson ever wrote, which was *Abominable Snowmen: Legend into Life*. That was a worldwide examination of the legend of Bigfoot, Sasquatches, Yetis, and everything else of that nature, which seem to be found on every continent, and whether there is a possi-

bility that any of these things really exist. I also did the first American edition of Tim Dinsdale's book on the Loch Ness monster. It's an easy switch from interest in crypto-zoology to science fiction and fantasy.

Thrust: Were you interested in science fiction and fantasy first?

Lanier: The two ran together. When I was a kid, I always wanted to be a paleontologist, and it wasn't until college that I discovered that to be a decent paleontologist, you had to understand math and physics, both sealed books to me. I can barely handle long division. And a paleontologist has to be a geologist, which means both organic and inorganic chemistry, physics and math. So I simply slid quietly into something I could handle, the English language. But my interest in zoology, and SF and fantasy, were always there, and I imagine always will be.

Thrust: Were you reading SF from childhood, like most people in the field?

Lanier: I, of course, have joined millions of people in regretting having thrown away copies of old THRILLING WONDER STORIES, AMAZING STORIES, FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, and that sort of thing, which even in tattered condition might be worth a small fortune. I started reading those magazines at twelve and never stopped.

Thrust: Did you attempt to write anything as a child?

Lanier: I never thought that I could write anything, and there was only one story that I was determined to write when I was fifteen, a one-shot. I was reading Sherlock Holmes for the first time and ran across one of those references Doyle's works are so full of, to Holmes cases that never existed. This one was the "Giant Rat of Sumatra." Once I discovered it had never been written, I was determined to write it. Four years ago I wrote that pastiche, and it was published in F&SF. It's called "A Father's Tale." If I ever get that second collection of Ffellowes stories together, it will be in it.

Thrust: Where did the Ffellowes series begin? They seem to be in the tradition of Jorkens.

Lanier: Either you read the forward carefully or are in a parallel time track with Arthur Clarke, because that's what they reminded him of, but frankly, the Brigadier came from Doyle. My father read aloud to me all those stories of the famous French cavalryman, Brigadier Gerard. Brigadier Ffellowes is an amalgam of Doyle, Kipling, and, for want of anything better, Bulldog Drummond.

Thrust: This sort of story seems to have fallen out of favor in recent decades. Nobody seems to be writing stories any more about the garrulous raconteur who tells of his exotic adventures

in remote parts of the world. Is this because it's now harder to convince readers there are remote parts of the world left any more?

Lanier: That's one reason the Ffellowes stories are so carelessly dated. The most recent in time, which took place at the end of World War II in Austria, will probably remain the most recent. There are few places we haven't seen on this planet, and finding lost races is getting harder and harder. That's one of the corners I've painted myself into.

Thrust: I think the 19th century lost-race novelists were already in that corner, which is why they were forced to describe such things as a vast civilization of pygmy, albino Negroes living under the Sahara. Have you even thought of writing a full-fledged lost-race novel, just for the fun of it?

Lanier: The novella (a word that I hate) that I am writing now is a lost-race story, and the giant rats of Sumatra are a lost race, if not human. I once owned a complete set of Edgar Rice Burroughs, and between Burroughs and H. Rider Haggard, they mined out the lost-race story, unless one cheats and uses time warps or paratime.

Thrust: Whitley Strieber's *The Wolfen* could be viewed as a lost-race story set in the Bronx. It's a lost race of werewolves, which was always there but undiscovered.

Lanier: I hadn't thought of that one. Strieber did a good job, although I didn't find the movie that good.

Thrust: How did *Hiero's Journey* and its sequel originate?

Lanier: Out of none other than Lord Greystoke. I like the idea of a great woods full of strange and improbable animals, and I tried to write about just that. Most of the animals are simply fossils that I have revived and claimed to be the result of genetic damage from radiation. They are straight out of some paleontology text. Others, such as the super-intelligent, gigantic snail, I just made up.

Thrust: Are you planning more of these books?

Lanier: There will definitely be a third, maybe a fourth. I might also do a collection about Hiero's youth and how he got to be the front-running soldier of the Metz Abbys and all that.

Thrust: Getting back to predecessors to Brigadier Ffellowes, are you familiar with Lord Dunsany's Jorkens series?

Lanier: I've read about twenty of them and I like them very much. But he never wrote one that was really scary. They are all more humorous than anything else, and I think a couple should have been creepers.

Thrust: The emphasis towards the end of the series was Jorkens as a liar. The members of the Billiards Club could never prove whether his fantastic adventures ever took place. Have you ever encountered such a raconteur in real life?

Lanier: Only once, and that was my dear friend, the late Ivan T. Sanderson. A lot of very heavyweight zoologists have denounced him as a fraud. All I can say is that he is a magnificent writer and he occasionally had a story he would swear had happened. One occurs in his first book, *Animal Treasure*, in which he and a colleague are wading up to the waste in an African stream, and over their head went a gigantic bat with a six-to-eight-foot wingspread. When they asked the neighboring villages about it, they were horrified and refused to discuss it. Ivan stuck by that story until his death. Some of his stories he was perfectly willing to admit were imaginative. There was one where he accused the British Museum of destroying his evidence. He claimed to have found in a cave in Trinidad a highly luminous lizard. No such creature is known--there are no known luminous animals above the level of fish. But he swore this lizard was luminous, and that they suppressed it at the British Museum. He also had in his icebox an enormous quantity of frozen dung, which he said was from a western American "abominable snowman" or Sasquatch, which analyses showed to be humanoid, not from a bear. I was never able to discover from him who did the analyses.

Thrust: What do you think motivates such a person? You'd think that to prove his case, he would say who did the analysis and how.

Lanier: You're asking for a psychometric analysis of a man who was a dear friend and is now dead. I can say that I am very sorry Ivan ever ran into show business. He was at one time a regular on television on things like "The Gary Moore Show," and I think it ruined him. I wish to God that he had gone back into the Upper Amazon, or the Ituri Forest of the Congo, and gone back to doing real field work. Some of his last books are to my mind regrettably pseudo-scientific, along the lines of von Daniken.

Thrust: Is there a little bit of him in Brigadier Ffellowes?

Lanier: No. But I will tell you a story which is true. A friend of mine in New York, Roger Carus, is a friend of Arthur C. Clarke. They were having an argument at my friend's apartment one evening about who was writing the best short fantasy pieces nowadays. Clarke said, "Well, the English still have it all over you," and proceeded to mention an English writer he thought was a real comer, Sterling E. Lanier. My friend had a violent fit of hysterics, and told him that he knew very well that author

was not English. I was raised by my own dinner table in Florida by a long distance call from someone claiming to be Arthur Clarke, which I thought was highly imaginative. When we got that straightened out, Clarke paid me a great compliment by saying that I had done the English dialogue so well that it had never occurred to him that it might have been written by an American.

Thrust: Had you researched it, or do you just have an ear for these things?

Lanier: I have what might be termed an eidetic memory for trivia. If something interests me, I'll remember it. I may forget that my wife told me to buy bread ten minutes earlier, but if a phrase in a book interests me, I'll remember it.

Thrust: What are your writing methods like?

Lanier: It depends entirely on whether I'm doing a short story or a novel. With a novel, the first thing I do is sit down at the typewriter and read the previous twenty pages. Then I start typing. On a good day I can do twenty pages, on a bad day eight to ten. But I always try to have a fairly detailed outline of the entire novel blocked out in my head.

Thrust: If you were to write the outline out in detail, would this freeze you up and inhibit you from telling the story.

Lanier: I've never done it, so I don't know.

Thrust: What are you working on now?

Lanier: I'm trying to finish this Ffellowes novella, which I've over-stuffed with ideas. I've painted myself in, and I'm trying to get out in a manner that makes some kind of coherent sense.

Thrust: What do you plan after the Ffellowes and Hiero series?

Lanier: I have no intention of ever ending the Ffellowes series. The wonderful thing about short stories is that you can always do more. I wanted to do a Ffellowes story with Sherlock Holmes, so I made it happen to his father. If I was offered the Koh-i-noor diamond to do a Ffellowes story set on the Baltimore waterfront last week, I could do it in a short story, although I wouldn't dare do anything like that in a novel.

Thrust: Don't you reach a point where there are just too many adventures for one man's lifetime? Dunsany got around this because Jorkens was probably a liar, but how do you get around that?

Lanier: I think all one has to do is make it plausible on the surface. All you have to do is think of Sherlock Holmes.

Thrust: How do you feel about pastiches in general? You've done things which are tributes, but never out-and-out pastiches. Would you, for instance, ever try to write a Professor Challenger story?

Lanier: I would do so with absolute fear and trembling, but that doesn't mean that somebody else couldn't. There was a book called *The Mountains at the Bottom of the World*, and it is an unacknowledged attempt to rewrite the *Lost World* thesis, but putting it in the southern Andes in Chile, instead of in the heart of the *Motto Grasso*. It's quite obviously Challenger, but there's no acknowledgement of it, which I don't like. [Note: The book is by "Ian Cameron" (Donald Gordon Payne), published by Morrow, 1972.] But I would be willing to try something short, just for fun. Whether I could make it believable, I don't know.

Thrust: The movie *Greystoke* presents a similar case—someone did something else based on the author's material.

Lanier: I found it highly annoying for one odd reason. I have practically memorized most of Burroughs, and thought the first half was magnificently done. But when they left Africa and began making a dubious Edwardian comedy, which

has no place in Burroughs or Tarzan, then I left. I think they were damned foolish, and I'm rather surprised that the Burroughs estate agreed to that.

Thrust: You didn't see the ending then. Tarzan fails to adapt to Edwardian society and goes back to the jungle.

Lanier: There are ways of handling that, as Burroughs did. Tarzan drinking soup out of a bowl just doesn't apply.

Thrust: Has there ever been any movie interest in your work?

Lanier: Now you're getting into very touchy ground. My automatic answer is that there will never be a movie. Starting with Columbia pictures and wandering here, there and everywhere, *Hiero's Journey* has been under option for seven years. It is now in the hands of an organization called Handmade Films, of whom the guiding genius seems to be George Harrison, one of the remaining Beatles. The most recent film of theirs was *Time Bandits*. I am told that this outfit has never optioned a movie it hasn't made. Having seen while an editor so many movie deals vanish in a puff of smoke, I'm hopeful but unbelieving. In other words, I'll believe this when the brinks truck pulls up to my door.

FRATZ

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15]

the heart of SF fandom?) Anyone have a good explanation as to why Randall missed out? Both Godwin and Kessel may have come close to getting Campbell nominations, although both may have been a bit far from the center of the genre to have had sufficient fan support.

Kingsbury spent six or seven years as a developing ANALOG writer before breaking out with his highly praised *Courtship Rite*, which got him his two award nominations, a Hugo and a Nebula, thereby explaining his lack of Campbell nominations. As for Crowley, there appears to have just been too much time between his first novel (*The Deep*, 1975) and his highly successful *Engine Summer* (1979). (I was unable to determine his short fiction background.)

Table 3 also shows ten more writers who have been eligible for the Campbell but weren't nominated, and each having received one fiction award nomination. As far as I can tell, any if these could have been close to Campbell nomination in their various years of eligibility. In addition, I can't leave this topic without also noting some of the really good writers entering the field in the last fifteen years who not only weren't nominated for a Campbell, but have never been nominated for a Hugo or Nebula Award either. (See the bottom of Table 3 for my list of those authors.) Looking on the bright side, it says a lot for the depth of quality writing in the SF and Fantasy field that authors like

Michael Kube-McDowell, Richard Cowper, Paul Preuss, Tim Powers, John Shirley, Rudy Rucker, Pat Cadigan and Tanith Lee, have never gotten a Hugo or Nebula Award nomination for their fiction!

My conclusion? We haven't done as badly as most of the field's pundits (including myself) might have guessed. There is a strong correlation between having been chosen for Campbell Award consideration and proving to be an important contributor to the genre; nearly half go on to produce award winning material. And the majority of the important new authors who were missed by the Campbell Awards were just slow starters who fell victim to the arbitrary two-year eligibility rule.

So despite the Campbell's obvious and inherent bias in favor of flash-in-the-pan writers who make a big splash in the SF field and are never heard from again, as well as for authors with high convention profiles, and against writers who develop their careers slowly and deliberately, the award has been, I think, a valuable and successful tool to recognize the germinating talent in our literary genre. It may even be a feather in the hat of the average SF fan, the Worldcon members whose choices are proven out well, who have appeared to be remarkably foresighted in most instances in choosing Campbell nominees from the large number of new writers entering the field each year.

THRUST BACK ISSUES

Issue #8 (Spring 1977). Interview with Ted White; Ted White on SF art; Doug Fratz on SF comics; David Bischoff on the Sense of Wonder; SF comic strip by Matt Howarth; Chris Lampton on the SF ghetto; book reviews.

Issue #9 (Fall 1977). Interview with Norman Spinrad; "Why I Am Not Announcing That I Am Leaving SF" by Norman Spinrad; Ted White on HEAVY METAL; Chris Lampton on breaking out of the SF ghetto; "Harlan, Come Home" by Charles Sheffield; Darrell Schweitzer, Ted White and Doug Fratz on Star Wars; comic strips by Stiles and Steffan; David Bischoff on SF and fandom; book reviews.

Issue #10 (Spring 1978). "On The Future" by Isaac Asimov; interviews with agents Kirby McCauley and Henry Morrison; "The Easiest Way to Become a Great SF Writer" by Charles Sheffield; comic strip by Derek Carter; Ted White on artistic creativity; David Bischoff on why he writes SF; Lou Stathis on being a reader for Dell Books; Steve Miller on SF story themes; book reviews.

Issue #11 (Fall 1978). Interviews with Theodore Sturgeon, Joe Haldeman and C.J. Cherryh; Ted White on SF music; Charles Sheffield on the science in SF; David Bischoff on the need for outside influences on SF; John Shirley on winning SF awards; Lou Stathis on SF writing workshops; book reviews.

Issue #12 (Summer 1979). Interviews with Fred Saberhagen and Octavia Butler; Ted White on animated movies; Charles Sheffield on the SF ghetto; David Bischoff on the NYC SF scene; Michael Bishop on the Gnomes book; John Shirley on paperback SF cover art; "The Making of Amazons" by Jessica Salmonson; Chris Lampton on the rising popularity of SF; Dan Steffan on SF&F art books; book reviews.

Issue #13 (Fall 1979). Interviews with David Gerrold and Alexei Panshin; Marion Zimmer Bradley on rape in SF; Ted White on SF writing; a satirical look at SF criticism by Michael Bishop; Charles Sheffield on the virtues of amateurism and professionalism; John Shirley on SF conventions; Dan Steffan on SF art; David Nalle on SF&F games; Steve Brown on the Campbell Awards; book reviews.

Issue #14 (Winter 1980). Interview with J.C. Ballard; Barry Malzberg on retiring from SF writing; Ted White on being editor of HEAVY METAL; Michael Bishop on

the humor of book blurbs; Charles Sheffield on SF writing; David Bischoff on the trauma and catharsis of selling one's old SF books; John Shirley with an alternative SF convention; book reviews.

Issue #15 (Summer 1980). "SF Retrospective: 1979" by Gardner Dozois; interview with Frank Kelly Freas; Michael Bishop on Dozois, Elgin, Utley and Watson; George Alec Effinger on SF writing; Charles Sheffield on SF criticism and reviewing; Dan Steffan on SF art; Ted White on SF prozines; David Nalle on SF&F games; book reviews.

Issue #16 (Fall 1980). Interview with Joan D. Vinge; Michael Bishop on Gene Wolfe; Ted White on Lovecraft's influence on fantasy; David Bischoff on Doctor Who; John Shirley on bad SF in magazines; Mark J. McGarry on being a new SF writer; Jessica Amanda Salmonson on going from fandom to prodrom; David Nalle on SF&F games; book and movie reviews.

Issue #17 (Summer 1981). Interview with Raymond Gallun; Michael Bishop on the SF of Ray Bradbury; Charles Sheffield on dealing with literary agents; George Alec Effinger on the need for outside influences on SF fandom; Lou Stathis on being an editorial assistant at Dell Books; book and movie reviews.

Issue #18 (Winter/Spring 1982). Interviews with Gregory Benford and Sontow Sucharitkul; D.G. Compton on his life as an SF author; Charles Sheffield on Gort; Rich Brown criticizes Algis Budrys' views on SF fandom; Mike Conner on rejection letters; Grant Carrington compares writing, art, and music; James

Wilson on Harlan Ellison; book reviews.

Issue #19 (Winter/Spring 1983). Interviews with Gene Wolfe and Thomas Disch; "The New Wave Years" by Gardner Dozois; Charles Sheffield on Carl Sagan's upcoming SF novel; George Alec Effinger on the gambles of SF writing; the 1st Annual Thrust Awards; book reviews.

Issue #20 (Spring/Summer 1984). Interviews with Michael Bishop and Jack Chalker; a self-interview by Michael Bishop; Charles D. Hornig on his life in and out of the SF world; Terence Green on academic interest in F&SF; Gregory Feeley on the still unpublished Last Dangerous Visions anthology; Robert Sabeila on influential people in the history of SF; 2nd Annual Thrust Awards; book reviews.

Issue #21 (Fall/Winter 1985). Interviews with Jack Dann and Larry Niven; Ted White on science fiction versus fantasy; Darrell Schweitzer on F&SF films; 3rd Annual Thrust Awards; Doug Fratz on scientific literacy in SF, awards and other sundry topics; book reviews.

Issue #22 (Spring/Summer 1985). Interviews with Al Sarrantonio, Philip Jose Farmer and Alexis Giliilliand; Michael Bishop on William Golding; Janrae Frank on Phyllis Ann Karr; Darrell Schweitzer on SF films; book reviews.

Issue #23 (Fall/Winter 1986). Interviews with Ben Bova and Sharon Webb; profile on Jane Yolen; Michael Bishop on Philip K. Dick, No Enemy But Time, and other topics; Marvin Kaye on immortalism; Darrell Schweitzer on films; Doug Fratz on Theodore Sturgeon; book reviews.

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REVIEWS

books, etc.



SCHISMATRIX by Bruce Sterling (Arbor House, 1985, 288 pp., \$15.95) (ISBN 0-87795-645-6)

Here is at last a novel in Bruce Sterling's patiently developed "Mechanist/Shaper" universe. For those few of you who have not read any of the previous stories in this series, it's set in a future where mankind is divided into two basic groups: the "Mechanists" make use of machine technology, while the "Shapers" rely on biotechnology. The latter seem to have an edge in the long run, reflecting the SF field's current fascination with the potential of the field of bioengineering. In addition, both of these persuasions are split into a myriad of more-or-less warring factions, between which one can navigate.

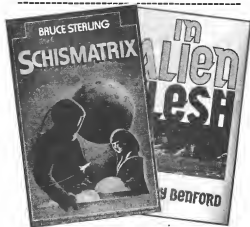
Which is exactly what Abel Lindsay has to do. He is trained as a diplomat, but finds himself in the situation of being an exiled aristocrat turned pirate. Thus, hard times for him: occasional bouts of violence, and hours spent tinkering in stripped-down space

habitats. All caught in a stripped-down style... more or less. Sterling is not as extremist as William Gibson in his writing style, but Sterling's is a novel of greater scope than *Neuromancer*. Lindsay will not remain a hoodlum of the spaceways all of his life, and his life is what this book chronicles.

There are some structural problems with Sterling's first novel: at some points it is skeletal, at others a potential short story seems embedded in the novel. But this affords us a view of some of Lindsay's ups as well as downs: the industrial spy becomes a stockholder himself, in the very volatile market which parallels (and underpins) the growth and spread of habitats in the System. Paradoxically, Sterling (like others of the "cyberpunk" category) celebrates capitalism while showing its gruesome side-effects.

Despite being a one-character novel, *Schismatrix* is science fiction of remarkable scope and excitement, and should not be passed by.

- Pascal J. Thomas



IN ALIEN FLESH by Gregory Benford (Tor Books, 1986, 280 pp., \$14.95) (ISBN 0-312-93344-4)

1986 may well prove to be the year of the single-author short science fiction collection; in the first few months of this year, nearly half a dozen collections have been published by some of the best authors in the field. These volumes are serving the valuable purpose of mining some of the best short SF in recent years, and collecting it by author.

In *Alien Flesh* by Gregory Benford is one of the collections appearing this year. It collects some of his best work of the past ten to twelve years, and as Benford's first short fiction collection, it is long overdue. Thirteen stories and one poem are included, along with afterwords by the author to each.

Benford is not a prolific author, so despite more than a decade's coverage, there is some variation in the quality and importance of the stories included here. But the best are very good indeed.

Much of Benford's best SF revolves around the theme of the strange and the alien. That is the theme of the title

story, where humans investigate a huge creature in an alien ocean to extract its mathematical secrets, and the equally successful "White Creatures" and "Exposures", in both of which Benford seems to have drawn extensively on his feelings of alienation while doing scientific research. The two best stories of that theme in this volume, however, are "Of Space/Time and the River" and "Time's Rub." The former manages to make an eerie and very believable story from the idea that aliens of incredible technology and unknowable purpose decide to change the Nile River valley back to ancient times and literally lift the entire region off the face of the Earth. The latter short story is a tour de force alien story, where two very unhuman aliens are approached by a third infinitely more alien being. Only somewhat less successful was "Me/Days," the chronicle of a huge, complex computer network as it develops self-awareness and its own identity.

Many of Benford's best stories people of various levels of technological sophistication struggling to survive in a declining civilization. "Redeemer" is set in a future where human civilization is so declining that generation ships are chased down and robbed to get new human genetic material. "Noon-coming" also takes place in a future of slowly declining technology.

Two of the best stories in this volume also follow this general theme: "Relativistic Effects" and "To the Storming Gulf." The first is a brilliant story of life in the far future among the people on a huge, out of control starship, which continues to speed up (therein being somewhat reminiscent of Paul Anderson's *Tau Zero*). The story is striking for both its brilliantly realized high technology and the striking portrayal of a small human society grimly holding on to life. The second is one of the best after-the-war stories (of the post-nuclear winter variety) ever written.

Among the lesser stories is "Time Shards," based on, the interesting concept that certain kinds of pottery may contain sounds from the past, etched like a phonograph record. Unfortunately, the story Benford chose to write on the topic was highly contrived. "Snatching the Bot" is a clever, but minor story about average people in the future who decide to steal some domestic robots. The final story in the volume is "Doing Lennon," a very serious story about a Beatles fan who follows through on plans to impersonate John Lennon in the future when awoken from cryogenic suspension.

Gregory Benford is one of the primary leaders of the high-literary, hard-science fiction movement. This, his first collection, must be highly recommended.

- Doug Fratz

THE MEMORY OF WHITENESS by Kim Stanley Robinson (Tor Books, 1985, 351 pp., \$15.95) (ISBN 0-312-93467-X)

"We cannot speak accurately of the spirit of any language but music," profoundly states the narrator of this tale, who introduces the chapters in a somewhat pompous tone. It is also difficult to convey accurately the concepts of music in lay terms, and presents a challenge to the writer akin to that in conveying in words the intricacy of some mathematical concept, a common stumbling block in SF. Robinson has combined both in the figure of Holywelkin, a musician, mathematician and physicist who looms large centuries after his death to the protagonists of this novel.

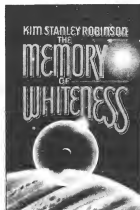
Holywelkin left behind him powerful physical principles he discovered, and a one-man orchestra. The current Master of the Orchestra, Johannes Wright, has undertaken to compose for it, and takes it on a grand tour of the Solar System. Since Wright is a highly enigmatic figure (like Holywelkin), Robinson has provided us with a music critic skilled in describing with words this nonverbal art to explain things to us. And possibly to provide comic relief as well. The critic, Dent Jos, is an endearing, Watson-like character, who reads meaning into everything and desperately wants to solve the events that mar the grand tour.

Plots abound in this book. Schemes hatched by the devious chairman of the institute which owns the Orchestra, and by the more mysterious "Greys," who come in many shades, and one is never sure how much they know or who they are. They may be the guardians of science, but like science, to the layman's eye, they are shrouded in secrecy.

Neat solutions are hard to come by in this novel. Robinson breathes powerful, randomizing life into his books. Like music which often yields greater pleasures the more it is heard, this is a book which very well may yield more insights with re-reading.

Very recommended.

— Pascal J. Thomas



CONVERTS by Ian Watson (St. Martin's Press, 1985, 191 pp., \$11.95)

One reason that I have less and less patience with bad science fiction is that there are so many good writers whose books I have yet to explore, and my time, after all, is not infinite.

Ian Watson has won no Hugo or Nebula Awards, mainly, I suspect, because too many people haven't gotten around to reading him yet. If they did, things might be different.

I've encountered his short fiction before, both as an editor and as a reader, but this is his first Watson novel I have ever read. The others sit on the shelf, patiently waiting. I am resolved now more than ever to get to them.

Watson is a witty and superbly intelligent writer who manages to include serious material even when he's being silly. *Converts* might be described as *The Island of Dr. Moreau* rewritten as a vehicle for the Marx Brothers. He has taken one of the most awesome of the standard science fiction themes, the creation of the superman, the theme of *Odd John*, *The Hampshires Wonder* and *More Than Human*, and done something unique—he played it for laughs.

The plot deals with the experiments of an eccentric millionaire to "interrupt the genetic program" of the human race, so that everyone may reach his true potential. Each one of the subjects of his experiment becomes a unique being, many of them following mythological models (as if from the racial unconscious), until it seems, at the end, a vast gestalt being is close to formation.

Meanwhile, the "Changed" community goes through numerous satirical pratfalls as they battle religious fundamentalists and the normal society around them. You will not soon forget the, uh, ravishing encounter between the respectable spinster and the super-ape atop a water tower, in full view of everybody.

In the end, God intervenes, but not the God the fundamentalists are expecting, and the experiment comes to a halt. The supermen, now freaks in a world they will never conquer, are banished underground, and become oddly resigned to their lot. Does Dull Humanity win? Perhaps. There is a lot of concentrated strangeness down there at the end, and Watson can always write a sequel.

One might fault this book for failing to focus on any one character—the point of view wanders among the many involved in the phenomenon—but the writing is so fresh and so delightful that *Converts* must be rated one of the best books of the year.

It clearly deserves your attention.
— Darrell Schweitzer

ECLIPSE (Volume 1: A Song Called Youth) by John Shirley (Bluejay Books, 1985, 341 pp., \$8.95) (ISBN 0-312-94130-7)

"Punk saga of the near future," the ads say. Shirley has done more than most of the current crop of SF writers to earn the "punk" label, having performed in a punk rock band for a number of years. On the literary side, Shirley writes tense and violent works, imbued with somewhat simplistic aesthetics.

The year is—ostensibly—2020, and

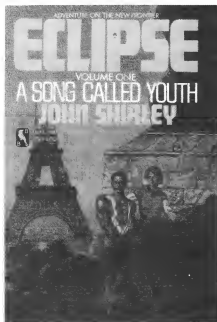
the fight is between the "Second Alliance," a sort of fundamentalist fascist secret society, and a group called the "New Resistance." The immediate stake is whatever is left of Western Europe after a limited war between NATO and the Soviets. The Second Alliance implants a xenophobic, authoritarian ideology where NATO is in tenuous control, while the New Resistance engages in skimmages and sabotage.

But Shirley cannot help bringing in a multitude of other subplots, located on a floating city in the Atlantic, in the USA, in a space colony—this is, after all, only the first volume of a trilogy. Unfortunately, his army of protagonists too often sound alike. Rickenharp, a rock singer, may be the most interesting and sympathetic, thanks to his vulnerability, but all of the major characters leave the same impression of being young, violent males. (Other male, and even female, characters outside of this mold do appear in this book, but, alas, few appear for long.)

Possibly worse is that Shirley's future is a tape-loop of our present. AIDS still strikes homosexuals. The French fascists are called "Front National" (It should be spelled "National" by the way; we French are picky about such details.) The fascists are led by Le Pen, the grandson of the contemporary figure. Rickenharp defends traditional rock'n'roll against those soulless new sounds. It goes on. There are mentions of The Grid, but nothing as strong as in *City Come A-Walkin'*. This novel might have benefitted from being set in an alternate, rather than future, world.

With all its shortcomings, however, it still packs a strong punch. We will see in subsequent volumes whether all the stage-setting in which this novel engages is justified.

— Pascal J. Thomas



It is more difficult than it used to be to write believable "after the bomb" novels, thanks in part to the latest "nuclear winter" scenarios publicized by scientists such as Carl Sagan. The war now must be extremely limited to allow any characters at all to exist, and it is very difficult to create any sense of optimism in a world so thoroughly devastated as the new models say it would be.

But David Brin's newest novel, *The Postman*, does indeed manage to generate such a sense of optimism, and shows how humans can experience rebirth of hope in appalling circumstances.

The time is 2011, 17 years after

the Doomsday ended civilization. Gordon Krantz is a traveling storyteller wandering across the ravished landscape of the Pacific northwest. One of his greatest fears is losing his precious stock of salvaged supplies, especially his toothbrush, since there are no more dentists. He is set upon and robbed, but stumbles upon the crumbling remains

of a rusted jeep with the skeletal body of a U.S. postal worker, his yellowed letters still on the seat. Being a bit of a con man, Krantz decides to pass himself off as a forerunner of a restored United States in order to replenish his rations and survive. The tearful joy of the first community he encounters makes him decide to continue his hoax.

Krantz is forced into more and more

elaborate charades to keep his tale alive. He forges credentials and recruits couriers. What civilization that exists is threatened from the south by a fascist group of survivalists. Krantz finally must use all the authority he has accumulated in his ruse to fight against that group and take a stand for democracy and hope.

The Postman is a fast-moving adventure story that avoids the pitfalls of gore and depression that often characterize post-holocaust novels. There are a number of emotionally moving passages. I also suspect there may be a sequel, since at the end of the book Krantz is heading out for the unknown territory of California.

David Brin has brought a new slant to a traditional SF theme. *The Postman*

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to This Review

Some Thoughts on L. Ron Hubbard's
The Invader's Plan

by Janrae Frank

After the galleys of *The Invader's Plan* had sat on my shelf for several weeks, insinuating guilt about the edges of my mind as only the work of one of my childhood's favorite authors is capable of doing, I decided to read and review it. A simple decision, really.

I had been aware for some time that Hubbard was an intermittent source of controversy within the SF community, but had never taken it too seriously. Upon making a decision to review *The Invader's Plan*, I went to my mainstream editors to ask if they'd be interested in running such a review (for financial reasons, I do almost nothing on spec these days). Four mainstream editors of long acquaintance turned me down after long interrogations of my motives for doing such a review. ("What are you, anyway? A Scientologist or something?")

My only contact with scientology came in 1968 when, as an insatiably curious thirteen-year-old, I sent off for a free pamphlet on the subject. A year of receiving nagging, hand-written letters followed the arrival of that slender booklet. I was finally forced to write them a "leave my child alone" letter, to which I forged my grandmother's name. But then one should never judge an author by his "fans," and I doubt that the person writing those letters to me knew that I was a snottosned kid, not an adult.

But I've always felt that a book, especially a work of fiction, should be judged on its own merits, not by what its author did away from his or her

typewriter. As any student of Western literature can tell you, fiction writing has long been the domain of social mavericks, moral degenerates, and dangerous dreamers, not to mention just plain bad dudes. Going back to the very roots of Western literature, we find Chaucer, dear to the hearts of librarians everywhere, was a convicted rapist who escaped the noose by claiming "benefit of clergy" (meaning, in that illiterate age, that he would read and write and was therefore too valuable to waste). Christopher Marlowe, a quasi-contemporary of William Shakespeare (and one whom the Bard is said to have plagiarized) may, if the rumor-mongers of the day are to be believed these four hundred years later, have been a murderer; he certainly seemed to delight in drawn-sword quarrels, and met his death in a dispute over a tavern bill. A great many writers seem to have tried to live up to the reputations of Chaucer and Marlowe, in deeds if not in talent. In much more recent memory in the science fiction field, there was the small matter of wife-stealing that opened a serious breach between one of SF's most illustrious editors of the 1950s and one of the field's most seminal writers.

I would have to say that so trifling a matter as founding a religious/philosophical movement (a practice which has become fairly commonplace since the 1960s) just isn't in the same league as rape, murder and wife-stealing.

A long time ago, when the subtleties of fiction and the nuances of language were more sharply defined, the term satire was limited to work whose humor derived from irony and sarcasm. To be satire, it has to have a bite to it. The shallow slap-stick humor of Robert Asprin and L. Sprague de Camp isn't really satire, although some may

be quick to apply the title to such light, humorous work.

The Invader's Plan has a delightfully sharp set of teeth which Hubbard sinks into a good number of science fiction literature's favorite objects of derision: intelligence agencies, bureaucrats; and Dudley Do-Right heroes, as well as one not so favorite current mystique (though it ought to be), feminist machismo.

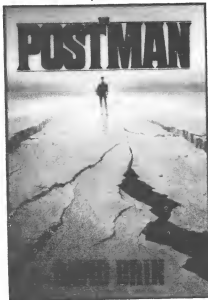
It seems that Earth has been marked for potential exploitation ("acquisition") by a ruthless galactic empire. But their advance scout gets a bad case of financial indigestion upon discovering that pollution and the threat of nuclear warfare is jeopardizing the empire's investment in time and research on what promised to be a very lucrative project. In order to enslave the Earth, they first must rescue it from corporate polluters and trigger-happy politicians.

The Invader's Plan is definitely worth the price of admission. As I begin reading the second book in what is promised to be a ten-book series, *Black Genesis*, it looks like the writing will hold up through the series.

Postscript: Shortly after writing this review I learned, along with the rest of the world, that L. Ron Hubbard had died. I can only wish that he had come back to science fiction sooner. It is small consolation that the ten volumes of *Mission: Earth* are reported to have already been completed, and I therefore will not be left dangling in the middle as has happened with other of my favorite authors.

As Hank Stine said recently about another deceased author (we've lost too many in recent months, Sturgeon, Herbert and Hubbard among them), "If he had written a hundred books, it still wouldn't have been enough."

- W. Ritchie Benedict



SCIENCE FICTION: THE 100 BEST NOVELS by David Pringle (Xanadu Publications, Ltd., 5 Uplands Road, London N8 9NN U.K., 1985, hardback/paperback)

In this book, well-known British science fiction editor, author, critic and fan David Pringle lists the one hundred science fiction novels published between 1949 and 1984 which he considers to be the best, or maybe more exactly, the most important, and includes a short essay explaining the rationale for each selection. It took no small amount of chutzpah for Pringle to write up his selections and publish it for all to see and disagree.

But that is indeed the fun of this book. I found myself highly surprised by many of his choices--there appears to be a strong British bias (or is it just the lack of an American bias?). There is also an overabundance of books by non-genre writers.

The list begins with Orwell's 1984 and Stewart's Earth Abides from 1949, and ends with Gibson's *Neuromancer*, the only book included from 1984. The idiosyncrasy of Pringle's selections can best be seen by his choices for the rest of the 1980s: *The Birth of the People's Republic of Antarctica* (1983) by John Calvin Batchelor, *No Enemy But Time* (1982) by Mike Bishop, *Oath of Fealty* (1981) by Niven and Pournelle, *The Unreasoning Mask* (1980) by Phil Farmer, *Ridley Walker* (1980) by Russell Hoban, and *Wild Seed* by Octavia Butler. (He also includes Sladek's Roderick books and Wolfe's New Sun series as single novels, both series being published during 1980-1983.) Of Pringle's one-book novels of the 1980s, only one (the Bishop book) was considered award-winning material within the field. The Batchelor and Hoban books did receive some notice as well-done speculative

novels by mainstream writers. But was *Oath of Fealty* really Niven and Pournelle's best novel? Better than *The Mote in God's Eye* (not on the list)? Was *The Unreasoning Mask* really Farmer's best novel ever? (I never read it, but the reviews I remember described it as a good adventure novel.)

I think the British bias shows in a number of selections which are not well known (and in some cases never even published) in America: *The Dreaming Dragons* by Damian Broderick; *The Walking Shadow* by Brian Stableford; *The Altercation* by Kingsley Amis, *High-Rise* and *Crash* by Ballard, *Inverted World* by Christopher Priest; and *The Centauri Device* by M. John Harrison, to name a few. I won't even get into which authors I think were mistakenly overlooked by Pringle, except to possibly mention Isaac Asimov, David Brin, George R. R. Martin, Anne McCaffrey, Vonda McIntyre, Larry Niven (as sole author), and Kim Stanley Robinson, a name just a few possible candidates.

Pringle's is an interesting exercise, although probably one more suited to publication in a fan forum to spark debates than as a hardcover and trade paperback format. But I must indeed recommend this to all serious SF fans with a critical interest in the literary history of the genre. May you have as much fun disagreeing as I had.

- Doug Fratz

ARTIFACT

GREGORY BENFORD



ARTIFACT by Gregory Benford (Tor Books, 1985, \$33 pp., \$16.95) (ISBN 0-312-93048-8)

This seems to be Benford's bid to cross genre boundaries. Commercially, we see a product packaged to look like a bestselling thriller: the cover art mixes woman, weapon and ancient art with only the barest hint of a space shuttle, and there is no mention of "science fiction" on either cover.

The plot also has many of the trappings of a near-future thriller. A team of American archeologists find them-

selves in trouble when faced with an increasingly xenophobic and authoritarian Marxist Greek government. One of them, Claire Anderson, had just made an unusual discovery, the artifact of the title. She involves a young mathematician physicist in her studies, and in her brushes with the Greek "scientist" and his less-than-scientific bodyguards.

Ultimately, physics, not archeology, are the key to the uniqueness of the artifact, and becomes the true driving force of the book. When the Americans get it back to the labs, the novel is reminiscent of *Timescape*, although it is never allowed to drift too far into scientific reflexivity; the spy story is always present. As a action-packed novel of political intrigue, *Artifact* has some flaws. Having Greece slip into a Marxist regime is a bit outrageous, but a premise I suppose can be allowed. But the final American expedition to Greece reeks of a fantasized remake of Carter's Iranian hostage rescue fiasco, even going as far as to have a helicopter crash and burn. The political thriller aspects are compulsively readable, but not as memorable as Benford's writing on science, which is in danger of being crowded out.

As in *Timescape*, however, we witness academic politics, and the human foibles of men of science. John Bishop, the mathematician who is drawn into the who business by his attraction to Claire, is particularly interesting. The hard science speculations are exciting in themselves (read the appendix), and the novel literally could not exist without them. That is what makes this novel hardcore science fiction by any definition.

- Pascal J. Thomas



FREEDOM BEACH by James Patrick Kelly and John Kessel (Bluejay Books, 1985, 259 pp., \$8.95) (ISBN 0-312-94168-4)

James Patrick Kelly and John Kessel may be the modern-day equivalent to Pohl and Kornbluth. Kelly and Kelly seem to write far more powerfully together than alone.

In *Freedom Beach*, their first col-

laborative novel and best work together thus far, we are brought to the world of *Shawn Reed*. Reed is undergoing "dream treatment" in the psychodrama of a resort called "Freedom Beach." Others like him are assembled, and their souls

laid bare, at least the parts of their souls remain after their memories have been shredded. Unable to put away the shadows of his past, Reed confronts an entity called the Sphinx, try to tear answers from it: Why is he at Freedom

ON THE REFERENCE SHELF

REFERENCE AND NONFICTION BOOKS ABOUT SF:

1985

by Doug Fratz

A surprising number of SF and fantasy reference books were published once again in 1985, along with various volumes of essays, art books, and books on SF films. This annual review in *THRUST* is aimed at providing short reviews of non-fiction books about SF and/or fantasy which may be of interest to *THRUST*'s readers.

Reference Books

SCIENCE FICTION BOOK REVIEW INDEX, 1980-1984, edited by H. W. Hall (Gale Research, 1985, 761 pp., \$160.00) Hall continues to tackle the daunting task of indexing every review of every SF/fantasy book published anywhere, including here. The price restricts this large hardcover to libraries only, however.

SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, AND WEIRD MAGAZINES, edited by Marshall Tymn and Mike Ashley (Greenwood Press, 1985, 970 pp., \$95.00) This massive volume contains extensive monographs on the history of every magazine ever published in the genre in the world, from *ARGOSY* to recent years. Like the Hall book, the price limits this to libraries and serious researchers.

MONTHLY TERRORS: AN INDEX TO WEIRD FANTASY MAGAZINES, compiled by Frank Parnell with Mike Ashley (Greenwood Press, 1985, 602 pp., \$65.00) This volume lists every story and every author in any U.S. or English weird fantasy magazine, 1919-1983, including all the numerous and obscure semi-pros. Of interest to libraries and horror fans.

THE WORK OF JULIAN MAY: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND GUIDE by Ted Ditky and R. Reginald (Borgo Press, 1985, 60 pp., \$9.95) This may be much more than most fans will want to know about Julian May (Iesson plans?), but I found that it painted an interesting portrait of a active, creatively eclectic life—it's like reading someone's 60-page resume. I, for one, was unfamiliar that her SF was just one more new career in an apparently long series.

Volumes on Single Authors

THE JOHN W. CAMPBELL LETTERS VOLUME 1, edited by Perry A. Chapdelaine, Sr., Tony Chapdelaine and George Jay (AC

Projects, 1985, 610 pp., \$5.95) This is long-in-the-works volume of the selected correspondence of Campbell, beginning in the late 1930s to 1971. It is a valuable project for posterity, although many of the letters are in difficult to follow due to many obscure references.

BENCHMARKS: GALAXY BOOKSHELF by Algis Budrys (Southern Illinois University Press, 1985, 349 pp., ?) This volume collects the first seven or so years (1965-1971) of Budrys's book review columns which were published in *GALAXY*. Budrys is the field's best and most productive critic; this book is highly recommended for libraries and serious students of the genre.

WONDER'S CHILD: MY LIFE IN SCIENCE FICTION by Jack Williamson (Bluejay Books, 1985, 276 pp., \$8.95) Published in hardcover (and winning a Hugo) in 1984, this warm and person account of Williamson's life is as amazing as his SF, and now is available in trade paperback.

VOLUMES OF COLLECTED ESSAYS

INSIDE OUTER SPACE: SCIENCE FICTION PROFESSIONALS LOOK AT THEIR CRAFT, edited by Sharon Jarvis (Frederick Ungar, 1985, 148 pp., \$7.95) This is a collection of ten essays on sundry aspects of SF by seven authors, two editors and an academic—essays of the type that until very recent years could be found only in such fanzines or semi-prozines as *THRUST* or *STARSHIP/ALGOL*. Most are quite interesting—recommended for somewhat serious fans and scholars.

EXPLORING FANTASY WORLDS, edited by Darrell Schweitzer (Borgo Press, 1985, 112 pp., \$6.95) Again we have ten essays, this time on fantasy, and in this case they really are from fanzines (mostly). Included are essays by Moorcock, de Camp, Anderson and Leibler.

THE SOUND OF WONDER: INTERVIEWS FROM "THE SCIENCE FICTION RADIO SHOW" VOLUMES 1 AND 2 by Daryl Lane, William Vernon and David Carson (Oryx Press, 1985, 203 pp./201 pp., \$11.95) There are 19 interviews of SF professionals in these two volumes. With all the interviews I have to read to edit *THRUST*, I didn't expect to enjoy reading these, but they are better than I expected for interviews done over the telephone by academics of whom I've never heard. The main problem is the price: at half the price it would be recommended.

SOME KIND OF PARADISE: THE EMERGENCE OF AMERICAN SCIENCE FICTION by Thomas D. Clareson (Greenwood Press, 1985, 249 pp., \$29.95) Like all of Greenwood Press books (this is book 16 in their *Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction & Fantasy* series), this is aimed at the academic audience, and priced for libraries. This may indeed be valuable, but remains arcane and uninteresting to me, despite my best tries to read it.

SF & FANTASY ART BOOKS

SPACEBASE 2000 by Stewart Cowley (St. Martin's Press, 1985, 192 pp., \$14.95) Cowley is an above average painter of colorful Star Wars-type stacheps and related hardware; unfortunately, this volume gets monotonous, and contains extensive uninteresting text simulating some sort of historical feature from the far, far future on the past history of spaceflight.

FANTASY ART TECHNIQUES by Boris Vallejo (Arco Publishing, 1985, 128 pp., \$19.95) The artwork of Boris Vallejo is truly stunning. The color works in this volume (most of them featuring nude bodies) have a hyper-real, sensual energy found in the work of only a few of the fields' best illustrators. The main purpose of the volume, however, is to present Boris' techniques in developing his works from photographs, sketches, color roughs, etc., to final painting. Highly recommended.

BOOKS ON SF & FANTASY FILMS

SCIENCE FICTION FILMS OF THE SEVENTIES by Craig W. Anderson (McFarland & Co., 1985, 304 pp., \$15.95) This book contains synopses, credits and commentary on about 50 of the most notable SF films of the 1970s. A better book than its packaging would indicate.

VINTAGE SCIENCE FICTION FILMS by Michael Benson (McFarland & Co., 1985, 219 pp., \$18.95) This one has lots of information on SF films from 1896-1949. Recommended for film history buffs.

FUTURE VISIONS: THE NEW AGE OF THE SCIENCE FICTION FILM by Douglas Merville and R. Reginald (Newcastle Publishing Co., 1985, 192 pp., \$12.95) This is basically a long essay commenting on the history of SF films mixed 50/50 with black and white stills. Of interest to those who can't get enough on films.

Beach? What brought him there? What purpose do the dream treatments serve?

In many ways *Freedom Beach* is meandering, plodding, sometimes sketchy, and incomplete, but gradually we come to appreciate the terrors Reed faces. Like psychological detectives, we retrace Reed's past, and how he faces it provides the pith of this tale. The collaborators sing, and the reader cannot help but listen.

- Andrew M. Andrews

THE INITIATE by Louise Cooper (Tor Books, 1985, 278 pp., \$2.95) (ISBN: 0-8122-53392-5)

This first book in Cooper's "Time Master Trilogy" is a fantasy set in a time and place when the powers of Order have been completely overthrown by the powers of Chaos. The Circle of Initiates, wizards endowed with the task of never letting the dark force of Chaos appear again in the world, have taken over the Castle of Chaos on the Star Peninsula, but after centuries of efforts remain unable to unlock its secrets.

Also centuries after Order's victory, an outcast child is born, Tarod, which possesses a talent for "magic" that no initiate can equal. Tarod is brought to the castle, raised among the initiates, and eventually becomes an initiate of high rank. But unbeknownst to himself, Tarod is an incarnate god of Chaos, and Chaos begins to call him from the walls of the castle itself. But Tarod is determined to keep his pledge to Order.

The *Initiate* is an excellent work of fantasy, exciting in both action and intellectual content. If the rest of the books in the trilogy hold up, Louise Cooper's "Time Master" trilogy could become a classic.

- Debra L. McBride

THE LAST RAINBOW by Parke Godwin (Bantam Books, 1985, 359 pp., \$7.95) (ISBN: 0-553-34142-1)

In the tradition of his Arthurian *Firelord* and *Beloved Exile*, Godwin takes us again to ancient Britain, before the birth of King Arthur. In this tale, we follow a brash young priest who would later become known as Saint Patrick.

As a young priest, before his mission to Ireland, Padraic is sent north to Scotland to convert the pagans to Christian beliefs. But the folk of the village where he is sent break both his ankles and leave him on a hillside to die. He is found by the queen of a band of Faerie-folk who live in the hillsides. She takes him into the tribe, and when he is healed, takes him for her husband. Padraic learns more from these folk about life, faith and love than he had ever hoped to teach.

The *Last Rainbow* is a beautiful tale of love, a love that leads both Padraic and his Faerie queen to even greater destinies than either had ever dreamed, and it is a joy to read.

- Debra L. McBride

AN EDGE IN MY VOICE by Harlan Ellison (The Donning Company, 1985, 548 pp., \$9.95) (0-89865-341-X)

An Edge in my Voice continues the resurgence of Harlan Ellison with a huge collection of essays on such diverse topics as the day Voyager approached Saturn, the moral majority, the death of George Pal, and the equal rights amendment. Ellison manages to weave all of these diverse topics into a rich tapestry depicting his views on life in these United States over the past five years.

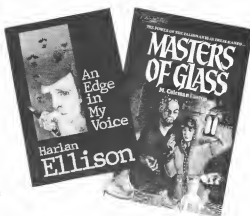
In the article on the death of George Pal, the man who brought us such SF films as *War of the Worlds*, *Destination Moon*, and *The Time Machine*, Ellison reminds us how the powerful in Hollywood deserted him in the end. The same people who made millions on his earlier successes couldn't be bothered to even meet with the old man to discuss a new film project. Ellison admits he was one of those people, declining to write a screenplay for the project. Like his fiction, Ellison's essays are packed with raw emotion, as he seems always at war with his own personal demons.

Ellison describes himself in his introduction as "an enemy of the people; he delights in exposing the hypocrisy and greed that he finds so prevalent in our modern society. Some of his most vicious attacks are on the moral majority, the National Rifle Association, and the television and movie industry. But he does not limit himself to attacking the giants. In a particularly moving essay, Ellison tells of a young school teacher who was fired for reading one of Ellison's stories ("I Have No Mouth And I Must Scream") to her class. In Ellison's hands, this becomes a moving story about unwarranted censorship and how we are steadily causing our young people to lose their faith in the American dream.

If you like the safe feeling that everything will work out fine without your having to get involved, *An Edge in My Voice* is not for you. But if you like hard-hitting journalism and you are not afraid to take a serious look at the problems faced by contemporary society, you will find much to think about in these pages.

Some of these essays will make you laugh. Some will make you cry. Still others will enrage you. But as with all of Ellison's work, none will put you to sleep.

- David F. Hamilton



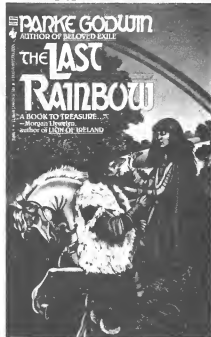
MASTERS OF GLASS by M. Coleman Easton (Popular Library, 1985, 245 pp., \$2.95) (ISBN: 0-445-20064-2)

Masters of Glass is Easton's first novel, and is a fantasy whose characters make use of "weak" magic. The main character, Watnojat, is a vigen, a small time magician who makes small glass discs with special pigments and spells to ward off attacks by either wild animals or the Lame Ones who live in the forest. But the magic is slowly fading, in part because he can no longer find the special pigment that matches the Lame Ones' eyes and thus is able to ward off their attack.

When Watnojat's assistant is killed by the Lame Ones, the aging vigen decides to make one last effort to obtain the pigment to produce the glass talismen for the next generation. Finding no deserving male, he chooses the daughter of his landlady to be his new apprentice. They set out on their search knowing their magic grows weaker while the Lame Ones grow stronger. In their search, they encounter an evil vigen in a distant village, who uses his magic talismen to enslave rather than protect his people.

This is not a grand epic or both sword and sorcery adventure. Easton has written a quiet and pleasing story. His characters and action are believable, and the story-telling clear and convincing, if not stylistically unusual. I can moderately recommend this book, both for itself and as an introduction to a fantasy writer with the potential of becoming one of the best.

- Neal Wilgus

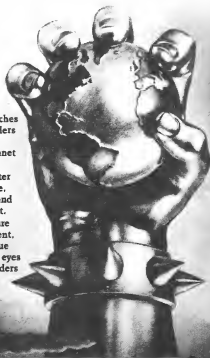


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Counter-Thrusts

Memory is tricky, The Great Trickster, in fact. So I won't get into an acrimonious emotional argument about her claim. Why not put the question to authorities such as Forry Ackerman or Sam Moskowitz?

Ah, Mnemosyne! What fun you have with mere mortals! I remember an article in the local newspaper shortly after I returned from that Philcon. I've always thought it mentioned the Hugo. Could I have reconstructed the past and just thought that it did? Do we all live in parallel worlds that just happen to intersect now and then?

[Phil also attached to his letter a copy of page 403 of *Seekers of Tomorrow* by Sam Moskowitz (World Publishing, 1967), which says:

By the time of the 11th Annual World Science Fiction Convention in Philadelphia, September 6, 1953, Philip Jose Farmer seemed to be riding on a crest of a wave. He was presented with the first of the series of awards later to become known as Hugos as the best new science-fiction author of 1952.

So it appears that based on Sam's book, the term Hugo was applied retroactively to all the 1953 awards. -DDF]

Donald Franson
6543 Babcock Avenue
North Hollywood, California 91606

issue of Aurora, which says a lot. There seems to be more balance in this issue than in the previous ones I've seen. I can't find one piece that stands out above the rest, but that is more due to the uniformity of excellence exhibited by the contributors than anything else.

Your own piece, "The Alienated Critic," with the Sturgeon memoir struck me strongly. He was greatly admired, but sometimes in later years was neglected when the authors in the field were ranked. Your article captured a bit of time-locked history, a frozen piece you allowed slaving readers to unlock. Thank you.

I read the book reviews in #23 with great interest as well. There are few outlets for good reviews these days. There is not, however, a dearth of armchair film reviewers. Darrell Schweitzer's column reminds me that film reviewers can do more than say they liked the movie enough to sit through it twice.

Philip K. Dick was an author I didn't discover until just a few years before his death. Michael Bishop's review of two of Dick's recently published books was very welcome, and it's good to see all of this unpublished work getting into print.

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Michael Bishop succeeded in making me feel bad in at least two ways. First he joins the swelling chorus of writers praising Philip K. Dick, and this makes me feel sorry for myself because I've never been able to enjoy the fiction of that renowned writer. It must be a basic incompatibility, because I read several of his novels all the way through and started several other that I was unable to endure past the first few chapters. Then I read the description of a novel I have not yet gotten around to reading, Bishop's *No Enemy But Time*, and this made me feel discouraged. If women's liberation efforts were underway two million years ago, as depicted in the novel, then that crusade is progressing even more slowly than I'd assumed, and it's apparent that it may not succeed in my lifetime.

The third part of Bishop's column and some parts of the Ben Bova interview read very differently since last week's space shuttle catastrophe. It is encouraging that no all-out anti-space sentiment has developed in the nation or its leaders. But I find resentment building in me over the Bova's enormous coverage of the disaster in contrast to the scant attention paid to the accomplishments of the successful shuttle flights. I remember working on the local morning newspaper the day the three astronauts burned to death, and the enthusiastic pep talks I got over the telephone from one of my bosses who wanted to make sure I played it up for all it was worth and more. I'd been in

LETTERS

Send all letters of comment to Thrust Publications, 8217 Langport Terrace, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877. All letters published earn one free issue. Deadline for letters to appear in issue #25: August 15, 1986.

Philip Jose Farmer
5617 North Fairmont Drive
Peoria, Illinois 61614

After sixty-seven years of more or less life on this planet, I did not think that anything unexpected could happen to me. Not until today when I read Noreen Shaw's letter in the latest THRUST #23. Until then I'd always had not the slightest doubt that the award I received for best new writer at the 1953 Philcon was a Hugo. Certainly, Noreen is wrong when she says it did not resemble a Hugo. It's an upright spaceship-form just like all the Hugos. It doesn't have "Hugo" on the plaque, but then neither does the one I won for *To All Your Scattered Bodies Go* in 1972. It says "Science Fiction Achievement Award." And spells my name "Philip," by the way. The one for "Riders of the Purple Wage" in 1968 does say "Hugo" on the plaque.

I suppose I'll have to defend my statement (not Howard DeVore's) on page 3 of *A History of the Hugo, Nebula, and International Fantasy Awards* that the Hugos were named at the 1953 Worldcon in Philadelphia. I quoted the March 1954 FUTURE column by Bob Madle, called "Inside Science Fiction." I will quote further from Madle (page 54): "Forry Ackerman, voted the year's top fan, turned his 'Hugo' over to Ken Slater of England." I wasn't there, so I only know what I read in the old prozines. I'm real touchy about this because no one has found a factual error in the book, not even picky Ed Wood.

[The plot thickens. Is Moskowitz wrong or Madle wrong? Or maybe neither. Could the term "Hugo Award" have begun to be used just a few months after Philcon (between October 1953 and March 1954)? Or maybe the term "Hugo" was unofficial con attendee slang during the convention but not used during the official selection and presentation process? This must be resolved! It is the kind of controversial issue which can rip fandom asunder! -DDF]

Daniel Farr
1750 Kalaheua Avenue, #403
Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

I thoroughly enjoyed THRUST #23; it was one of the best issues of a semi-prozine that I have seen in a long, long time. It beat out such luminaries as the last

change during previous space flights, and was never been advised to play up the news. An accident may be more newsworthy than an uneventful shuttle flight, but the difference in coverage has gotten out of bounds. The general public learns every detail about the blowup but gets only an occasional paragraph about the results experiments on successful flights.

If cryonics should ever involve large quantities of deceased persons, I hope the future can cope with the potential mental problems as well as fixing the physical problems which caused the death. More and more, people are dying at a more advanced age, and the older you are, the harder it is to adapt to changed conditions. I'm having great trouble in my early 60s coping with the changes that have occurred gradually throughout my lifespan: public acceptance of abortion, promiscuity, the trend toward a drugged and drunken populace, the ability of criminals to escape more than a slap on the wrist, violence in the media, and so on. If I died at age 70 and was defeated in the 21st century, would my elderly mind survive the great changes in society and technology, as well as a new cast of characters? Unless science can get into the human mind and cure it of the problems of old age, I don't think I want Marvin Kaye's immortality.

Like you, I never had a chance to talk one-on-one with Ted Sturgeon. I attended a couple of cons where he was present. But every time I say him, he was surrounded by other fans and pros; I didn't want to intrude. He probably would have felt as badly as you did about your interviewing difficulties, if he had learned how much the interview meant to you. I think I know why Ted's fiction didn't reach the mundane world and score sensational successes in the 1960s and 1970s. He wrote about and preached love. Mundane society, particularly the young, were talking a lot about the need for love during those years, but they weren't interested in loving others; they were in love with themselves, seeking sexual satisfactions without responsibilities, freedom from laborious toil without understanding how much others depend on hard work, freedom from wars involving the U.S. because they didn't want to fight (but perfectly willing to applaud conflict elsewhere in Poland or South Africa), in love with the most selfish of all human activities, the hallucinations created by alcohol and other strong drugs. Ted Sturgeon's outlook on life was radically different: he wanted people to adopt real love, the love of neighbors, love of strangers, love of enemies, not just love of oneself.

Diary, with all these years of reading science fiction to protect you, you are still feeling future shock? I would suggest that our basic societal values have not really changed as much as you may feel they have. There has always been promiscuity, use of alcohol and

drugs, and criminals escaping justice. The main change I see over the past thirty or forty years is the addition of intense media attention and dramatization of every aspect of our society. Nothing is hidden, nothing is ignored by the all-watching media. I believe that the basic nature of the American public has not significantly changed. (But then again, in Hagerston who can say what's been going on?) -DDF]

Jessica Amanda Salmonson
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Seattle, Washington 98102

Darrell should've known better than to try to comment on books he hasn't read. Phyllis' Frostflower books are not about Amazon society, but about a society in which a special caste of women are the only warriors. The society is otherwise patriarchal, with farmers rather than warriors running the show, and the women outside the warrior caste are pretty milquetoast, just the way Darrell supposes women should be.

Nonetheless, there are two things wrong with his flat statement that "Amazonian societies never have existed." First, were his statement provable, it shouldn't have that much to do with how fantasy is written. Time travel is not likely ever to exist, but should SF writers stop writing about it, and should we not enjoy H.G. Wells? But as a point of fact, in recent history there have been societies in which women were

the best and most lionized warriors: the Nayars of India had mounted women warriors never defeated until the British, at great loss of life among their own troops, got rid of the fighting Nayar women with superior modern weapons against their primitive ones. The Dohomey were equally a terror in Africa, and even today a tradition of martial readiness exists for a small segment of Dohomey women's societies (and "women's societies" is the perfect description, equivalent to masonry in their close-knittedness and secrets). There are at least a dozen like examples of women warrior groups in relatively recent history, including the all-female "death squads" the Russians put in Europe in both world wars, and which have been widely written about. It did not lead to extinction as Darrell supposes; indeed, the whole notion that warfare and women doesn't mix with reproduction is silly. One can fight pregnant; warfare isn't constant; not everyone will be a warrior even in the worst scenario; women have fought side-by-side with men in every war where native territories were invaded; and war just isn't a very reliable method of population control no matter how the fighting is divided out. Finally, there are so few certainties about ancient peoples that only the most dogmatic and untrustworthy historian would deny absolutely the possibility of full-blown Amazon societies having existed in at least a limited sense in finite areas. The one certainty is that

women in modern times have been warriors. It doesn't take a really huge leap into feminist outrageousness to assume that it was more common, not less so, in ancient societies (and such divergent sources as Tacitus and the *Helike Monogatori* certainly suggest this to be the case). I can't even understand anyone having the dogmatic notion that Amazon fantasy is "feminist...arcaned...doctrine," since the Amazon is not a fixture of the feminist philosophy so much as a recurrent figure in historical romances devoid of feminist concerns. Herodotus, Tasso and Spencer are hardly saying, "This'll teach the macho piggies and raise the status of women!" when they wrote about fighting women. They were spinning romances or recording history. Modern writers should do no less.

Andrew Weiner
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I was interested in Parke Godwin's comments on Walter Tevis in *THRUST* #22, and in Darrell Schweitzer's follow-up letter in #23. While I also regard Tevis as a greatly under-rated writer, I see no real mystery about why he was under-rated, at least within the SF field. Darrell seems to assume that Tevis wanted to be regarded as a "great SF writer," and may have succeeded if he hadn't wasted his time writing mainstream fiction instead. Actually, Tevis wasn't writing much of anything between *The Man Who Fell To Earth* and *Mockingbird*, for various reasons (alcoholism, mainly). But this is, in any case, a distorted view. No doubt Tevis would have liked to be seen as a great writer --and maybe he would have been, given more time--but he would surely have been horrified to be seen merely as an SF writer, great or otherwise. I claim no special knowledge of Walter Tevis' ambitions, but I did interview him once, and he was quite clear that he did not see himself as an SF writer. He even refused to allow his publishers to label his later novels as science fiction. He wanted to reach a much broader audience, and to a degree he was successful: *Mockingbird* was no blockbuster, but it did attract more attention than the usual genre production. The obvious parallel here is Vonnegut, who also published a few short stories in genre magazines early in his career, but never wanted to take up residence in the ghetto. Darrell implies that Tevis sought and was denied the acclaim of the SF community. Actually, I don't think Tevis really cared what the SF community thought of him, any more than Vonnegut does now.

But why didn't the SF community recognize him as a great writer all the same? There are two reasons. Although he wrote something resembling SF some of the time, he didn't know or care about Campbell, Heinlein, et al., about the rules and regulations and fads of modern

American science fiction, and he certainly didn't yearn to win the Hugo or whatever. Second, and perhaps more important, he was too good. *The Man Who Fell To Earth* (1963), for example, is an extremely complex, adult novel—not only a remarkable treatment of a classic genre theme, but also a book of great metaphorical power, both psychological and religious. Despite its points of resemblance with what we have come to know as modern American science fiction (aliens, spaceships, dying planets), it really is quite a different, and superior, commodity. It is hardly SF at all within the definitions of 1953, or, for that matter, 1985.

What book won the Hugo in 1963? It was Simak's *Here Gather the Stars*. (Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle* was among the runners up, but Tevis was not a contender.) An unforgettable classic, right? I've enjoyed Simak, but can't say I remember that one. We're hardly talking about the same form of literature, in any case.

Mockingbird was almost equally neglected within the field. Russell Hoban's *Ridley Walker* got much the same treatment. (See the comments by Norman Spinrad, who really ought to know better, in a recent ASIMOV's, arguing predictably that Walter Miller did the post-holocaust story better twenty years ago; in the first place, he didn't, and in the second place I don't think that Miller can be considered a real SF writer either, but that's another question.) The message is clear: if you're not one of us, if you didn't spend your early adolescence reading ASTOUNDING, if you don't come to our conventions, if you don't join our little club, then you can just piss off.

Tevis hated the movie of *The Man Who Fell To Earth* too. I thought it was pretty good, actually.

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I am fascinated by the posthumous career of Phil Dick and the industry surrounding it. Like the case with St. Freud, it will be years before all the whisperings and dismissals by contemporary neighbors are taken in context by future historians and students as real and valid criticisms. Having Dick in Vancouver for two months at the time of a crisis (the usual) in his later life has made local fans separate the man from his writings. Never meet your literary gods—their feet of clay may be smelly.

Was David Pettus with Ben Bova for the interview? Pettus is abnormally terse, and Bova verbose, making it seem like a mail interview. (I would be interested to see interviews done through interactive computer hook-ups some time.) But does Bova really believe that if one man can convince a majority of the 250 million people in the U.S. to believe in a project it can

be accomplished regardless of costs, or scientific or physical limitations? And what is this method of management, not in use before NASA, that got us to the Moon? There have been other great technical projects since World War II which have been great successes. This sounds like the Teflon stories, which is talked about as a space age material even though invented in the 1930s.

As for the Strategic Defense Initiative, what about submarine launched missiles, cruise missiles and other slow, ground-hugging methods of delivering nuclear weapons, including infiltrated trucks. Sorry, but Star Wars (TM) does not seem very useful, and just enables one to survive a hit for the second launch. To make it really effective, one has to launch first to reduce the large numbers of enemy missiles to numbers the computer can deal with. As for reliability of computer controls, look at the BART subway system in San Francisco and the years it took to get it under control. But a space defense system can't be tested operationally except in a missile exchange. No thanks!

Regarding the book reviews, if you thought Willis' story ["Blue Moon"] was sophomoric humor, what about Varley's prize-winning, in-group-humor, sick short ["Press Enter"]? Perhaps people should read it backwards to see what a light piece it was.

[The Pettus interview was done neither in person nor by mail, but rather over the telephone. Much of the terseness you noted may have been my editing job—I generally edit interviews in THRUST quite heavily to maximize readability.]

Regarding Teflon, although it was discovered by accident in the late 1930s (as nasty, unwanted gunk formed in a storage tank of pressurized fluorocarbon), it was only characterized and useful purposes developed, as I remember it, in the early 1960s, partially as a result of spaceage materials research for the space program. When a chemical product is discovered doesn't really mean much; many tens of thousands of new chemicals are discovered each year (over

AREN'T YOU CLOWNING
AROUND IN THE
WRONG GENRE, AL?



four million have been cataloged. The hard part is determining what things the chemical is useful for!

Ben Bova's laudatory remarks about NASA's management structure do seem somewhat suspect, based on the investigations following the shuttle disaster, which seem to indicate an incredible systematic flaws in NASA decision-making structure. Has NASA just gone to hell in recent years? —DDF]

We Also Heard From:

Mark J. McGarry, who wrote in answer to last issue's editorial to give me two pages of excellent advice on what I need to do to improve THRUST, based on his experience with EMPIRE;

Chris Drumm, who says that a new THRUST is a welcome sight because most of the other semi-prozines (LOCUS, SFC, FANTASY REVIEW) "get redundant after a few minutes";

Robert Bloch, who found #23 a particularly praiseworthy issue, and especially liked the interviews, which give "valuable insights into the people and personalities of our microcosm"; and,

Paul Cook and Allen Koszowski, among others, making general comments.

EDITORIAL

[continued from page 4.]

reach for a word from my mental lexicon, and get a similar or related word instead. Last issue, I gave the title "Feduciary Follies" to one section of the editorial dealing with the financial troubles of THRUST and other semi-prozines. Some readers may have wracked their brains trying to figure out the connection. But what happened was that I reached for the word pecuniary (of or related to money, a term I with which I am very familiar due to its use in environmental policy and economics) and instead typed feduciary, which my mind must have had stored somewhere nearby.

Such are the woes of being an over-worked editor. Anyone still interested in a job at Thrust Publications?

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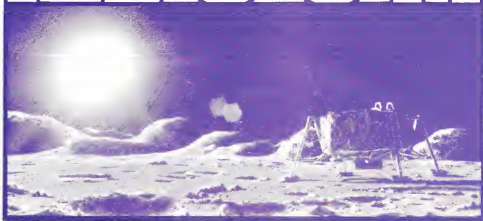
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